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HARVARD'S HOLLOW CORE CURRICULUM / FICTION BY RICHARD BAUSCH

THE ROOTS OF MUSLIM RAGE

BY BERNARD LEWIS

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47 THE ROOTS OF MUSLIM RAGE

The struggle between Islam and the West has now lasted for fourteen centuries. It has consisted of a long series of attacks and counterattacks, jihads and crusades, conquests and reconquests. Today much of the Muslim world is again seized by an intense—and violent—resentment of the West. “Suddenly,” a distinguished historian of Islam writes, “America had become the archenemy, the incarnation of evil, the diabolic opponent of all that is good, and specifically, for Muslims, of Islam. Why?”

by BERNARD LEWIS

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Harvard's stature and the media's lavish praise have made Harvard's core curriculum, which was implemented in 1979, one of the most influential in America. “Yet the history of the core,” the author, a recent Harvard graduate, writes, “is a study in what's wrong with American universities. . . . It owes its existence to Harvard's willingness to sacrifice content in order to preserve consensus.”

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WHEN THE HISTORIAN Bernard Lewis published his first scholarly article (on the guilds of medieval Islam), in 1937, at the age of twenty-one, the Muslim world languished on the fringes of Western consciousness. Most Muslim lands had been reduced to colonies or dependencies of the various European powers. Today the Islamic realm figures prominently—perhaps sometimes too prominently—in the headlines, whether because of its own turbulence or because of its increasingly frequent collisions with the West. *The Atlantic* during the past decade has published a number of reports on upheavals in the Muslim world. Lewis's cover story in this issue, with its great range and authority, provides a broad intellectual context for such reporting.

Bernard Lewis was born in London in 1916. He studied history at the University of London, specializing in the Middle East, and though embarked upon a career in law was directed toward his life's work "by a combination of repulsion and attraction": by the prospect, on the one hand, of a required course in real property and conveyancing, and by the award, on the other, of a fellowship that provided for a lengthy stay in the Middle East.



Lewis in the late 1940s

Lewis eventually received advanced degrees from the Universities of London and Paris. In 1940–1941 he served in the British Army; he was later attached to a department of the British Foreign Office. After the war Lewis returned to academe, where he has remained, writing and editing more than a score of books on the Middle East. His books have been translated into nineteen languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Malay, and Indonesian. Lewis came to the United States—to Princeton University—in 1974. Last year he was chosen by the National Endowment for the Humanities

to be the 1990 Jefferson Lecturer in the Humanities, the highest honor the federal government bestows for achievement in the humanities. Lewis's article in this issue is drawn from his Jefferson lecture, which he delivered in Washington last spring.

When asked during a recent interview how, as a youth, he had felt upon arriving in the Middle East on his formative initial trip, Lewis chose to quote the nineteenth-century Arabist Edward Lane: "On my first landing I was filled with emotion, like an Eastern bridegroom about to lift the veil of his as yet unseen bride."
—THE EDITORS

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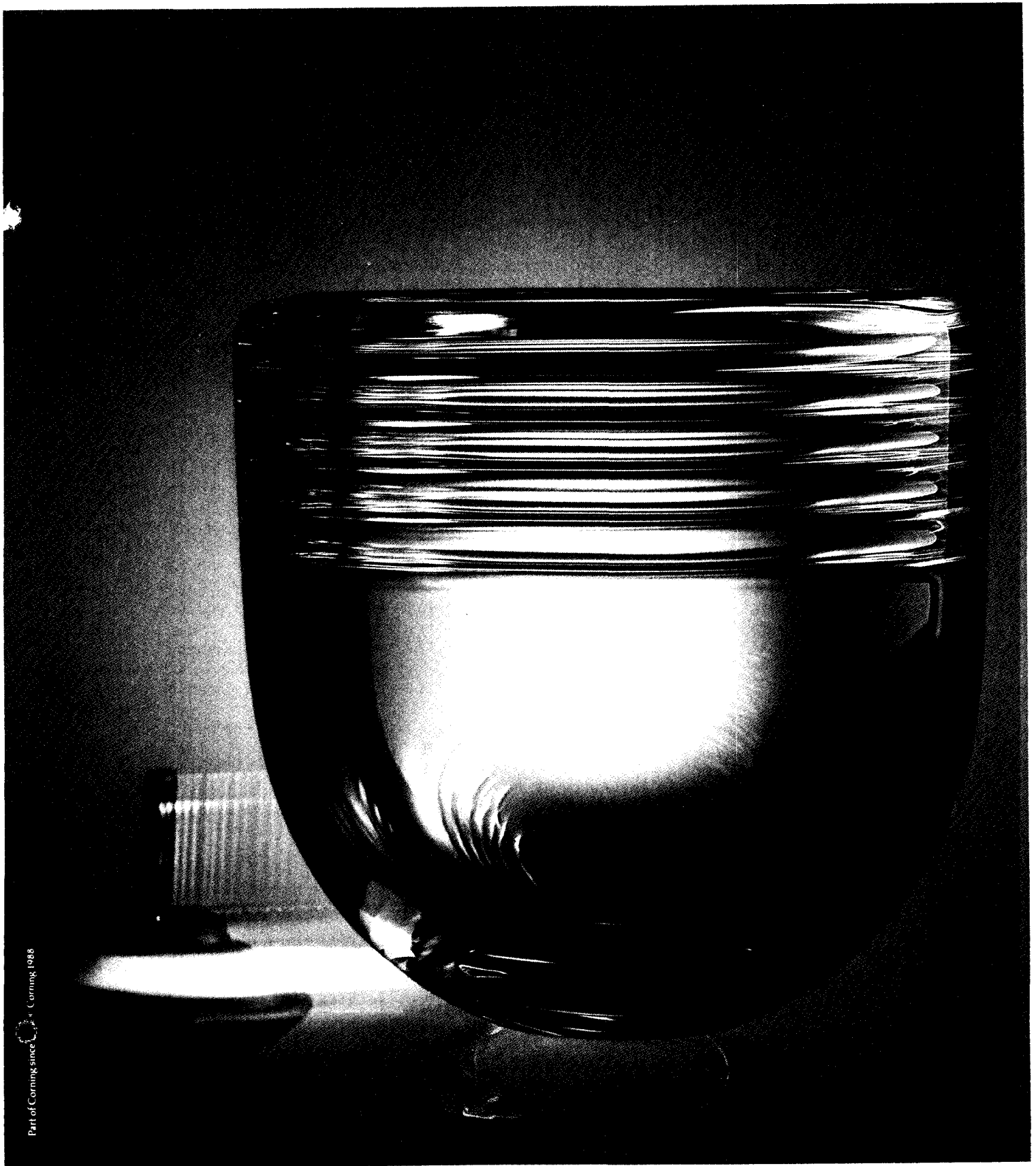
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



GROWING UP SCARED

Re Karl Zinsmeister's article "Grow-
ing Up Scared" (June *Atlantic*): I
have no argument with his assessment
of the enormity of the problem and I
agree it is a scandal.

Restoring public order and strength-
ening the hands and the laws that pro-
mote it certainly would be a help. I dis-
agree that it is primarily a children's
issue; children are merely the primary
victims in a society that gave up mor-
als, public decency, and the making of
value judgments approximately forty
years ago.

Cohabitation without legal marriage
was called a sin in 1950, and it was a
punishable crime in many communi-
ties. A woman on welfare could lose
her assistance and her children if she
took a live-in lover. Now he's the "man
assuming the role of spouse" and his
needs (and income) are computed into
the grant. Children who could not be
placed for adoption, whose parents
could not or would not care for them,
were placed in orphanages. There
were undoubtedly some poor orphan-
ages—but there were also many excel-
lent ones. Children who were deemed
incorrigible—guilty of repeated truan-
cy, repeated running away, theft, ar-
son, rape, sexual misbehavior, murder,
doing drugs or alcohol, carrying weap-
ons—were sent to reform schools, usu-
ally until they were twenty-one. They
weren't permitted to remain in the
community and to contaminate others.

Very large price tags are attached to
helping couples become adequate, car-
ing parents, insuring adequate prenatal
care for every pregnant female, giving
aid to troubled AFDC families who
aren't caring adequately for their chil-
dren, and providing effective mental-
health care for all who need it, includ-
ing institutionalization for those who
can't be cured. Yet the cost of these
things is a drop in the bucket com-
pared with the price we are now paying
for decades of public apathy and ne-

glect and putting individuals' rights
before society's rights.

A nation that chooses as its heroes
hedonists and million-dollar-contract
baseball players is never going to make
the hard decisions to spend money on
saving our children and society.

JOAN R. SHELDON
Tumwater, Wash.

If I were not media-smart, I would be
astounded that Karl Zinsmeister's ar-
ticle made no mention of the American
Civil Liberties Union's persistent suc-
cessful legal activities over the past
few decades, which have contributed
greatly to the shift of responsibility for
sociopathy from the individual to soci-
ety. Nowadays the problem student
must not be held accountable for his
actions, because he's just an innocent
victim of "the system."

What probably inhibits a school ad-
ministrator most from expelling prob-
lem students, searching lockers, and
the like? The fear of being branded
discriminatory, of violating someone's
civil liberties, of fighting and losing a
lawsuit with the ACLU, filed on the
grounds that the student is in some le-
gal sense a victim, abused by a tyrannical
society.

The ACLU would seem to be pursu-
ing the inviolability of individual civil
liberties as an unqualified good, not to
be balanced by any requirement to
maintain society in a civilized form.
But civil liberties *must* be balanced by
social responsibilities more reasonably
than they are at present. Unrestrained
individualism is incompatible with
civilization.

CHARLES B. GENTRY
Atlanta, Ga.

Karl Zinsmeister states that "the
most important source of violence
by and among children is family break-
down," and that "there is broad agree-
ment . . . that family disintegration is
at the root of many of the social and
economic problems that worry us

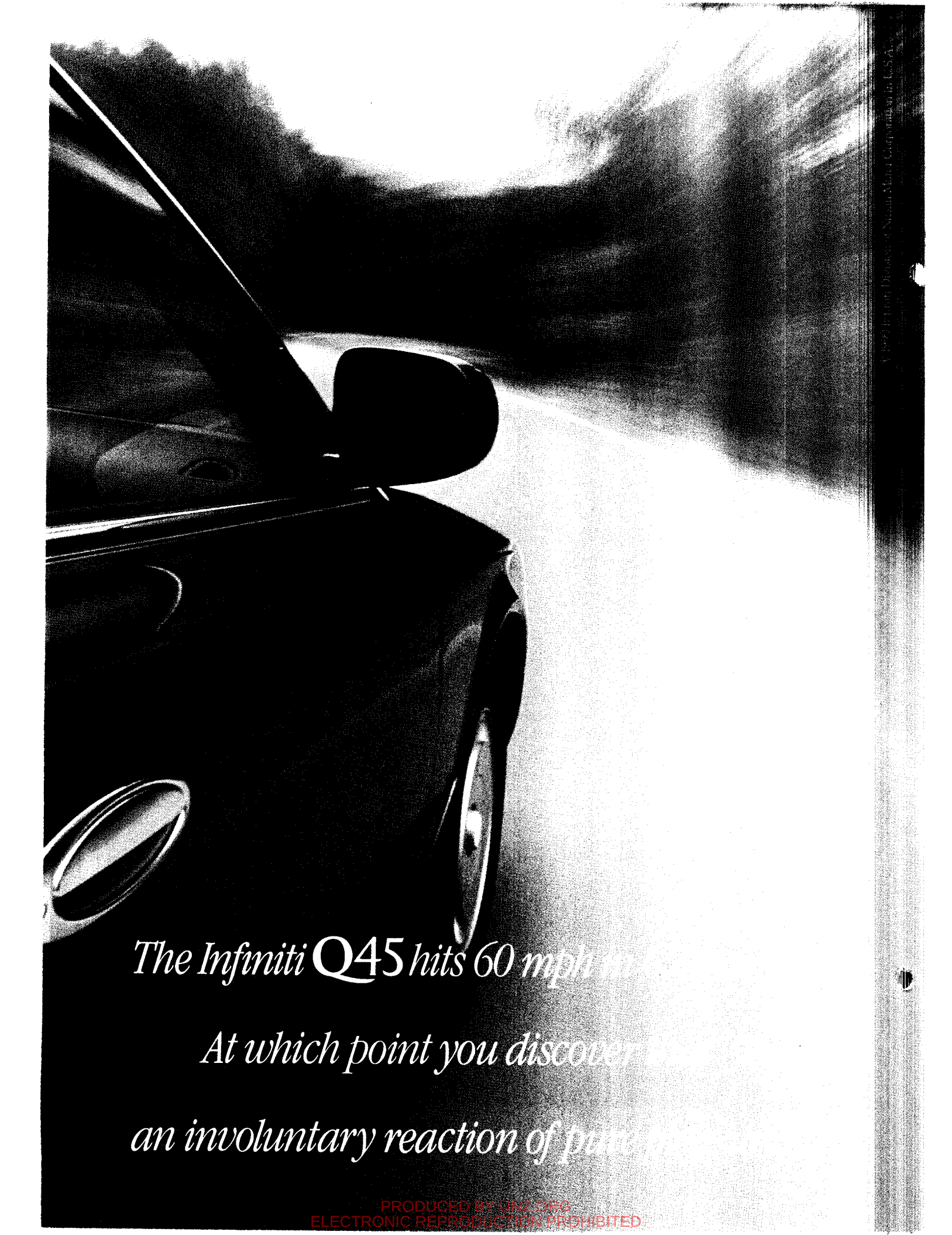


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Car & Driver 6/90



most." His discussion makes clear that when Zinsmeister refers to family breakdown, he means families not headed by two parents.

This "broad agreement" excludes knowledgeable criminologists. Decades of criminological research have produced virtually no support for the proposition that homes not headed by two parents are a major source of violent behavior among children or adults.

In arguing the need to "crack down" on personal crime, Zinsmeister notes that the percentage of people arrested for offenses involving violence or drugs who are sentenced to more than a year in prison is not high (18 percent for violence, 10 percent for drugs, 49 percent for homicides).

It doesn't seem to occur to him that case attrition can occur for reasons having nothing to do with prosecutorial or judicial tenderheartedness. Police or prosecutors may have determined that a crime did not occur, or that the person arrested did not commit it, or that the evidence was too weak to justify prosecution or conviction or, in rare cases, that it was obtained illegally. Sometimes complainants withdraw complaints. Witnesses disappear, refuse to testify, or lack credibility. Charges are sometimes reduced to compensate for earlier overcharging of relatively trivial offenses; probationers or parolees are often returned to prison without a new conviction; judges sometimes take time served awaiting trial into account when they pass sentences. There is little that can or should be done about some of these factors.

That case attrition and undue leniency are not crippling the criminal-justice system is suggested by the conclusion of a Vera Institute study of the prosecution and disposition of felony arrests in New York City. It concluded, "Where crimes are serious, evidence is strong, and victims are willing to prosecute, felons with previous criminal histories ended up with relatively heavy sentences."

In holding out the hope that tougher sentencing will reduce the level of violent inner-city crime, Zinsmeister never mentions the extraordinary toughening that has already occurred over the past quarter century. Prosecutors and judges are handing down stiffer sentences, sometimes in conformity to legislatively mandated guidelines.

From 1974 to 1989 the prison population more than tripled, reaching 673,565 by June of last year. Zinsmeister's article makes clear how limited an effect on crime this unprecedented growth in prison populations has had.

DAVID F. GREENBERG
Professor of Sociology
New York University
New York, N.Y.

Karl Zinsmeister cites "broad agreement . . . that family disintegration is at the root of many of the social and economic problems that worry us most." He then self-consciously adds that his perspective is not based on "personal prejudice."

I would like to point out to Zinsmeister that more than 5,000 women and children were killed by domestic violence last year, and that much of this violence was committed by men who were in what Zinsmeister would consider an acceptable family structure. Disintegrating family structure (that is, the absence of a man in the family) is *not* at the root of our social ills. Rather, it is the amount and kind of dysfunction in a family, regardless of its structure, that is the determining factor. Poverty and a parental history of abuse as children is the best recipe for family failure. It matters little whether there is a husband-father figure in this recipe; in fact, the presence of a man with a childhood history of abuse frequently makes matters worse if he feels compelled to re-enact the violence he once experienced, as so frequently happens.

Children, both boys and girls, who are raised in a loving atmosphere, one that is respectful of and responsive to their legitimate needs, regardless of the makeup of that family, are going to grow up to see parenting as a privilege, a joyful challenge, a priority; they will not become the next generation of criminals.

A. D. BROOK
Seattle, Wash.

Reading "Growing Up Scared" was quite interesting and thought-provoking. My colleagues and I have found in a population of 2,000 urban delinquents from Chicago that a majority had problems similar to those portrayed in the startling review of human anguish published in the June issue of *The Atlantic*. In our studies a majority of

the delinquents had school problems (9 percent were hyperactive, 15 percent were retarded, and 45 percent were learning-disabled). We also found that most delinquents were orphaned or came from one-parent or stepparent households. A subpopulation of adolescents who killed had four symptoms: criminally violent families, gang membership, alcohol abuse, and severe learning difficulties. Other violent criminal adolescents had brain or birth problems in addition to growing up in one-parent households. This is much like the picture portrayed in the article.

Karl Zinsmeister hints that solutions to adolescent violence might include stricter sentences and holding parents more accountable. Other methods that have been successful are early prenatal and childhood medical care, behavioral family-management training, and increased use of hospitals, schools, clinics, social agencies, and courts that provide integrated and comprehensive treatment.

ROBERT SYLVIES
Illinois School of Professional Psychology
Chicago, Ill.

The breakdown of the family is certainly one of the proximate causes of street violence, but others are the acceptance of violence as a valid means and the legitimization of abstract acquisitiveness as a goal. The cures that Karl Zinsmeister proposes—more and longer prison sentences, boot camps, and what he ominously refers to as incapacitation—will only add to the problem. One need look no further than this for evidence: although the United States keeps a far higher percentage of its population in jail than any other Western democracy, it also suffers from much the highest rate of violent crime.

KURT TIDMORE
Lubbock, Texas

I am grateful to *The Atlantic* for publishing Karl Zinsmeister's "Growing Up Scared" and giving it the prominence it deserves. Too many people of good will consider issues of public safety to be strictly for political Neanderthals. With Zinsmeister we are perhaps willing to face up to our neglect of children at risk. What we have been living with is unjust and illiberal.

HAL RIEDL
Baltimore, Md.



Karl Zinsmeister replies:

From among this interesting batch of responses let me selectively fasten on to a couple of critical points: David Greenberg knows of no evidence of a link between family breakdown and violence. He might start by glancing at Robert Sylvies's letter describing his study of 2,000 Chicago youngsters. Sylvies's conclusion that "most delinquents were orphaned or came from one-parent or stepparent households" is typical of what one finds in scores of other, similar investigations. Far more conclusive than the multiple regression ditherings of sociologists is the simple fact that three quarters or more of the children who actually end up in serious trouble with the law—in reform schools, in gangs, convicted of murder, and so forth—are consistently found to have come from broken families.

Greenberg contends that the proportion of felony arrestees who subsequently go to prison may be very low for reasons unrelated to tenderheartedness. I say, who cares? Whether it is because of tender hearts, soft heads, lousy evidence-collection, or something else, all that matters is that our present criminal-justice system is incredibly inefficient at connecting serious crimes with serious penalties. A huge majority of felons get away with it. Until that changes, streets will be dangerous.

Greenberg's claim that the past quarter century has brought an "extraordinary toughening" to our criminal-justice system leaves me gasping. Twice as many children will be murdered in 1990 as were murdered twenty-five years ago, although the population under eighteen is much smaller. His

claim is refuted by grassroots developments in most any American city over that period.

Recent events in my home town, Washington, D.C., are fairly representative. As is now well known, Washington is one of a number of U.S. cities that are in the midst of a murder epidemic, and local politicians are thickening the air with righteous jabbering about getting tough on crime. In actual fact, however, not a single permanent and significant measure to solve the problem has been undertaken, even

law—which is the regimen currently in place—a prisoner serving, for instance, a court-ordered sentence of five to ten years for armed robbery gets even his minimum term reduced 80 percent, and is released after serving two years and one month (assuming "good behavior," which is certified routinely). This provision plus a shortage of prison space which literally makes it necessary to let someone out of lockup every time a new convict is put in have set up a grand-scale revolving door at Washington courthouses. Is

this a rigorous system of justice? Should we be surprised that it is not working?

A. D. Brook points out that domestic violence afflicts a variety of family types. True, but as most social workers and law-enforcement officials will tell you, the female-headed family with a boyfriend in the house is far and away the configuration at highest risk for domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse of children, and so forth. And while it is true that violence and abuse patterns can repeat generationally, one of the best protections against this is the presence of

the other parent in the home—to share burdens and so head off frustrations, and to moderate the behavior of the parent at risk when things get rocky. Finally, I must differ with Brook on the importance of fathers. I believe strongly that they are needed, both as a second source of help, income, and love, and also because fathers add a different dynamic to family life from the one that mothers do. Single mothers who are trying to control teenage boys in poor city neighborhoods have their hands full—as they are the first to admit.

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though residents are currently being shot, knifed, or bludgeoned at the rate of nine a day, and we are in the midst of our third straight record-setting year for homicides.

But it is even more startling to recall that as recently as 1987 the Washington City Council and the mayor pushed through new legislation (against objections from the local law-enforcement establishment) that systematically cut the sentences of city convicts to levels way below what was being ordered by the presiding judge. Under the new



GERMAN ATOM BOMB

Thomas Powers ("How the Bomb Was Kept From Hitler," May *Atlantic*) is correct that the world owes a debt of gratitude to Werner Heisenberg and his fellow physicists. These men risked their lives to inform the United States and Great Britain that Germany had indeed begun an atomic-bomb program. Heisenberg and his fellow physicists may well have slowed the German bomb effort, but I cannot accept Powers's central point that they alone are to be thanked for America's gaining the atomic bomb. Heisenberg was correct when he told Albert Speer that an atomic-bomb project was beyond Germany's wartime capabilities. Certainly Heisenberg's failures helped Speer in his assessment that production of an atomic bomb was not feasible. But Speer was no fool; he would gladly have added nuclear weapons to the Nazis' arsenal *if he thought it was possible to do so*. Given only theory and Heisenberg's own doubts, it is clear that the German bomb program stalled at an early phase. Again, we must

thank Heisenberg for his "foot dragging," but it was *not* the reason Speer chose not to fund a German bomb program. Speer's decision was made by balancing the value of the program against its cost, and the cost of the program would have been billions of Reichsmarks, which even once spent would not have guaranteed success.

GAVIN FEEHAN
Granada Hills, Calif.

In my opinion, a book review should be fair and impartial. Thomas Powers's review of my book, *German National Socialism and the Quest for Nuclear Power: 1939-1949*, is neither. Powers should have mentioned that he is writing his own book on this subject, and he appears to be handicapped by his own expertise. He is determined to transform the history of the "German atomic bomb" into a spy story.

I haven't the space to refute Powers's review in detail. But I want to discuss two general points: the seductive yet misleading quest for "the crucial document," and Powers's euphemism "shadow history." Powers has placed

great emphasis on a single document. But dozens of equally suggestive—and, I might add, equally misleading—documents can be quoted out of context as well, and thereby abused in order to "prove" almost anything about these German scientists. The document Powers chose to feature in his review is both misleading and irrelevant. Unfortunately Powers apparently does not understand what is and what is not important in a historical sense. He certainly does not understand that one document does not make a history.

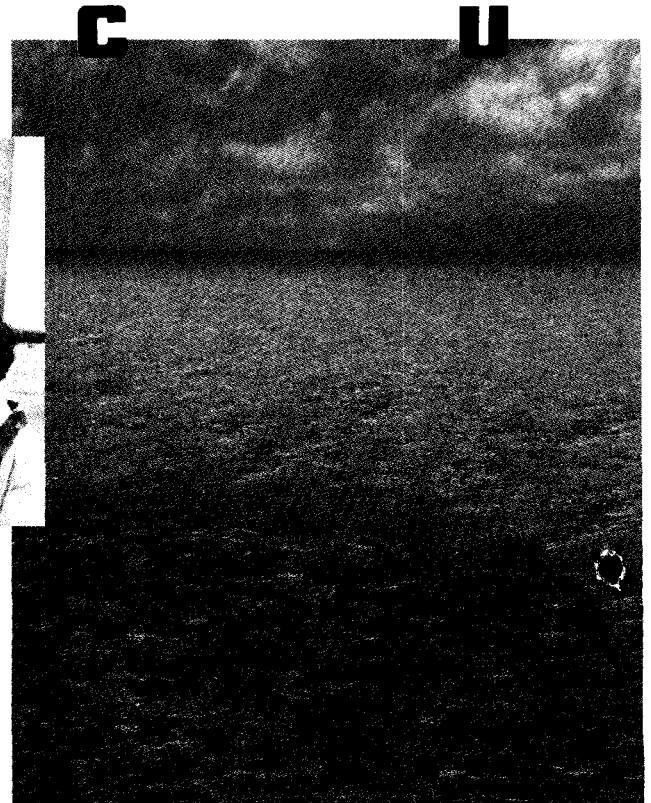
When Powers writes of the "shadow history" he favors, the word "shadow" is used as a euphemism for "undocumented" and "unverifiable." But several perfectly good words in the English language describe what Powers wants to write and what he criticizes me for not writing: "myth," "fable," and "legend." The disagreement between Powers and me is really a clash between genres, between history and storytelling. The legend of a small group of scientists successfully conspiring to deny atomic bombs to Adolf Hitler and *thereby* saving the world from

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Nazi nuclear weapons is a great story. But it is not true.

MARK WALKER
*Union College
Schenectady, N.Y.*

Thomas Powers replies:

I wouldn't call anything history which can't be documented or verified. By "shadow history" I mean both the human context of official action and secret intelligence activities intended to remain hidden forever; it differs from the conventional variety of history in the questions it asks and the types of evidence that might provide answers. The German bomb program had an official institutional structure, and Walker's book depends heavily on contemporary official documentation to describe what it did. That's fine as long as what we want to know is how much money it spent, who got invited to the official conferences, what its official priority was in the competition for scarce materials, and so on.

But the really important question about the German bomb program is why it failed. Walker and I agree that

the authorities were convinced the effort was too big for Germany in wartime. We agree that Heisenberg told them it was too big for Germany in wartime. Where we disagree is on two related questions: Did Heisenberg's advice play an important role? I think it did. And why did Heisenberg give that advice? The best answer, in my view—the one that accommodates *all* the evidence—is that Heisenberg didn't want to build a bomb for Hitler. One important piece of that evidence is Rudolf Ladenberg's letter of April, 1941, which I cited in my review. Its source, provenance, and date all make it very hard to dismiss. Walker calls the letter irrelevant, and regrets he has not the space to discuss the reasons in detail here. I regret it too, but trust he will get around to it eventually.

ADVICE & CONSENT

I have read your magazine for years, and have enjoyed the back and forth in the Letters to the Editor section. But your authors are so authoritative

and right that I have never felt qualified to join the fray. So imagine my dismay that now that I have finally found a bone of contention, it is in an article as important and well written as "Rescuing Oily Birds," by Rachael Bishop (May *Atlantic*). On the bottom of page 38 the bird being held by the person in the yellow overalls is a western grebe, not a murre. The bird clearly shows lobed feet, a yellow bill, and a red eye, all field marks of the western or Clark's grebe. The fact that the bird's black cap covers the eye distinguishes the bird as a western grebe, rather than a Clark's. But distinguishing between the two can be difficult. The birds in the other pictures are labeled a scoter and a murre; these labels identify the genus of the birds but not the species. From the pictures, I suspect that the scoter is a white-winged scoter and the murre a common murre. These are minor corrections in an otherwise excellent article. Please maintain your excellent coverage of natural history in general and birds in particular.

DONALD McCULLOUGH
Chapel Hill, N.C.



PERSONAL SERVICE, 1990

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THE SEPTEMBER ALMANAC



HEALTH & SAFETY

September 11, judging from data gathered over the course of more than a century, this is the most likely day in the year for a hurricane to strike the United States. The numbers of deaths and injuries caused by hurricanes vary widely from storm to storm; with most hurricanes people are safer (though not safe) while the storm is in progress than they are once it has left the scene. Of the 35 South Carolinians whose deaths, in 1989, were officially attributed to Hurricane Hugo, 22 died after the storm had subsided. The causes of death included drowning, accidental electrocution, and house fires. According to a government survey, six deaths attributed to Hugo in South Carolina occurred when homeowners "suffered heart attacks after reviewing property loss."



ARTS & LETTERS

September 10, *Trump Card*, a bingo-style game show to which the financially troubled real-estate magnate has lent his name, makes its television debut today. 23, Jesse Jackson becomes a talk-show host with the premier of the syndicated weekly program *The Jesse Jackson Show*. The program, according to its producers, will serve as "a forum rather than a platform." 29, the last stone—a 1,008-pound Gothic finial—of the Washington National Cathedral will be set into place; the cathedral, in Washington, D.C., has been abuilding since 1907.

Q & A

Does the body retain forever any of the cells it had at birth?

Yes. We are born with a full complement of nerve and muscle cells and, in females, of eggs. Most cells, however, are continuously undergoing regeneration and renewal—in some cases, at an astonishing clip. The cells that inhabit the harshest environments—skin cells, blood cells, and the cells lining the digestive tract—generally reproduce and die most rapidly. Some skin cells, for example, live only about eight hours.



DEMOGRAPHICS

If a longtime pattern holds up, more babies will be born per day in September—about 350,000 of them altogether—than in any other month this year. The annual number of births in the United States has been rising of late; according to provisional data, the figure surpassed four million last year—for the first time since 1964. Recent surveys suggest that although most Americans take a relaxed attitude toward children—virtually every adult has or wants a couple, and people care less than they used to about gender—there is a hard-core fringe who take extreme positions. A recent Gallup poll found that roughly 4 percent of adult Americans can be classified "anti-children": they don't have any or want any. At the other end of the spectrum—and also making up roughly 4 percent, according to a Spiegel Home Fashion Monitor study—are those who, when a son or daughter leaves home, "preserve the room as a shrine" to the departed child, instead of (like most Americans) turning it into a guest room or storage room.



GOVERNMENT

September 4, primaries today in Florida and Nevada kick off a month in which voters in 17 states select Republican and Democratic candidates for a variety of federal and state offices. 6, the House reconvenes after the Labor Day recess. 10, the Senate reconvenes. 30, by this date the Boeing 707 that for 17 years has served as Air Force One—and which no longer meets federal pollution standards—will be retired from service and a new, modified Boeing 747 will take its place. The new aircraft will be turned over to the Air Force in Wichita, Kansas. The presidential 747 will carry 85 telephones and 12 television sets. A second, backup Air Force One will be delivered in 1991. The cost of the two aircraft, whose wiring has been designed to withstand the electromagnetic pulse that follows a thermonuclear blast, will exceed \$250 million.

ENVIRONMENT

Sometime this month meteorologists should know whether this will be a big year for El Niño. Years ago Peruvian fishermen noticed that every year, a warm current came along the coast, bringing wet weather and bad fishing; because it usually arrived around Christmas, they named the current El Niño ("The [Christ] Child"). Scientists have adopted this name for the larger, recurring climatic shift centered in the equatorial Pacific Ocean which brings rains to Peru and Ecuador and warm winters to



the northwest coast of the United States. Efforts to predict the intensity of El Niño have in recent years been the focus of much attention from (and sophisticated computer modeling by) climatologists. Some scientists have recently drawn attention to a kind of mirror-image abnormally cold period in the eastern Pacific. This counterpart to El Niño's warming is variously called La Niña ("The [female] Child") and El Viejo ("The Old Man").

THE SKIES

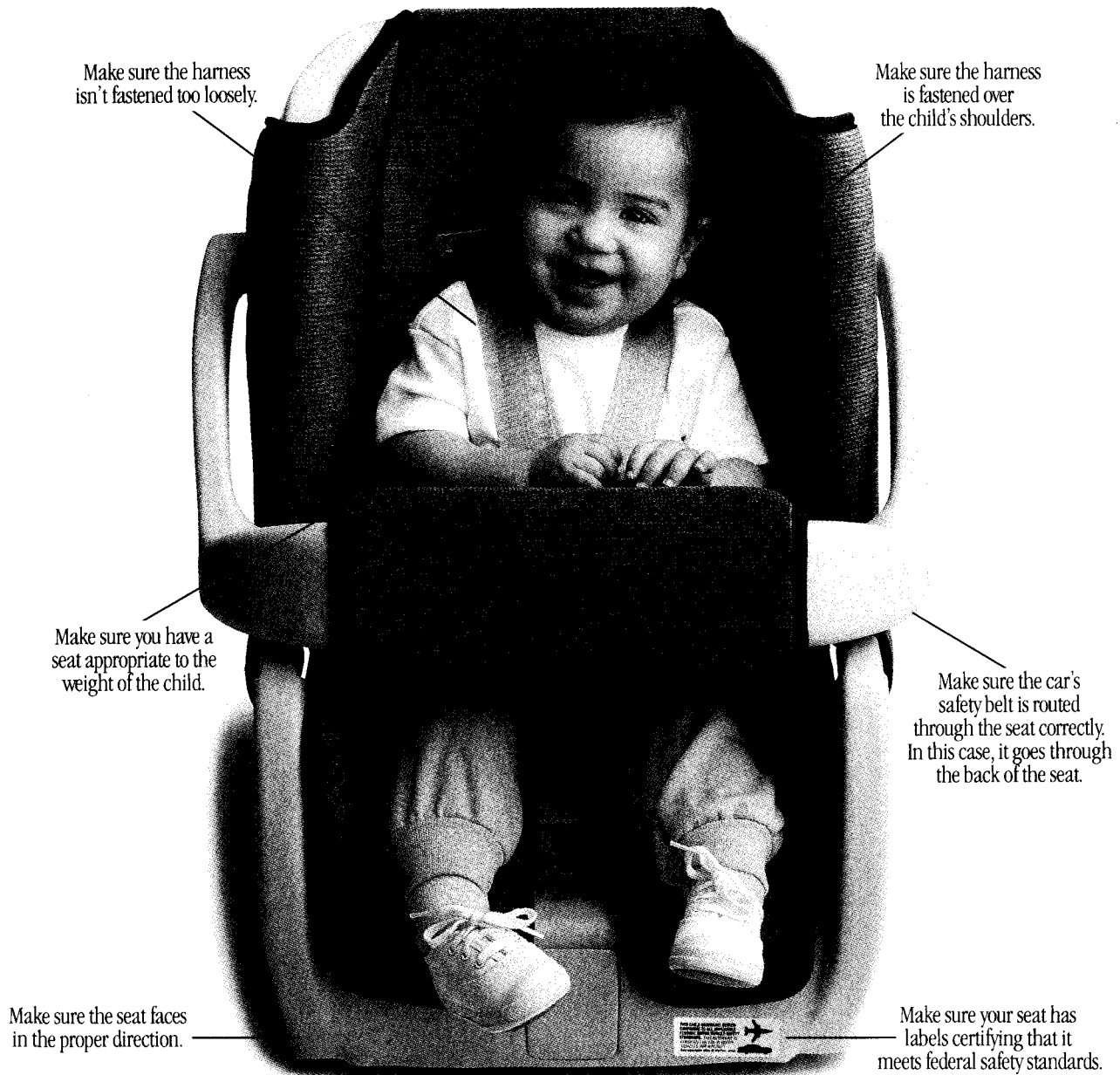
September 4, Full Moon, also known this month as the Fruit Moon. 18, New Moon. 23, Autumnal Equinox. Those living on the equator will find the Sun, which is heading south, directly overhead at noon. The great winter constellation Orion this month lumbers up over the horizon just after midnight.



100 YEARS AGO

Josiah P. Quincy, writing in the September, 1890, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "Universal education and facilities for influencing thought are thrusting into prominence many men who are hopelessly one-sided,—men who will accept nothing as proved, and who sting the established social order like hornets. And necessity, that mother of invention, has enriched our English speech with a word to distinguish them. We call them *cranks*,—one of those crisp monosyllables which are easier to understand than to explain. *Snob* was another of these useful creations; it entered the language somewhat earlier. Cranks come from all classes, and may be roughly defined as persons who have not the instinct of their order."

What makes a child seat safe is how an adult uses it.



One-third of all child seats aren't used correctly. It's one reason traffic accidents are the leading cause of death in children. To change that, double-check your child's seat. Read all instructions and follow them carefully.

Allstate championed child seats long before they became law in all fifty states. Through our "Buckle Up Baby" program, we offer infant seats to employees when their children are born. That's because a child seat improves a kid's chance of surviving an accident by 70% if used correctly. For a free booklet by the American Academy of Pediatrics and a discount coupon from Sears on child seats, see an Allstate agent or write to: Allstate, Dept. 500, P.O. Box 7600, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-9961.

As adults, it's our job to make sure child seats are used right all the time.

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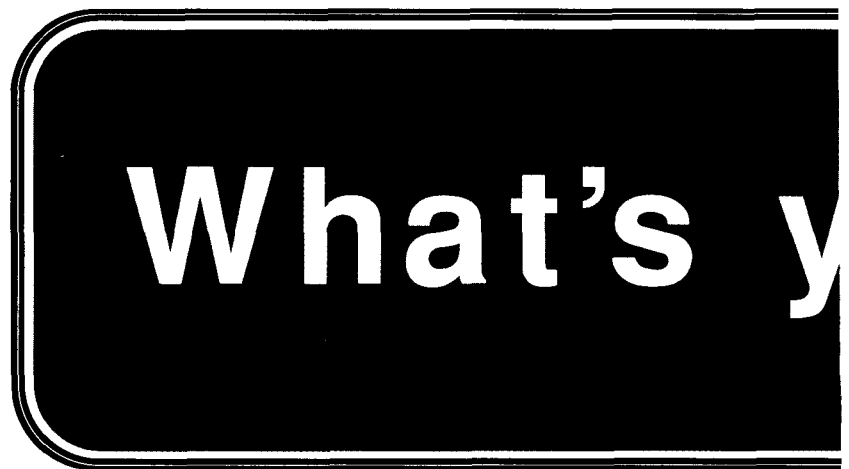
Nobody drives the way you do.



You see some of these signs more than others. Which of them you see every day depends on how and where you drive—a pattern that's unique to you.

You chose your vehicle, probably, to reflect that pattern and get good performance for all the kinds of driving you do. The tires just came with the vehicle.

But tires are where performance—how well the vehicle corners, how securely it grips a slick highway, how fast it can stop—is finally determined. Tires can alter the performance characteristics that drew you to your vehicle in the first place.

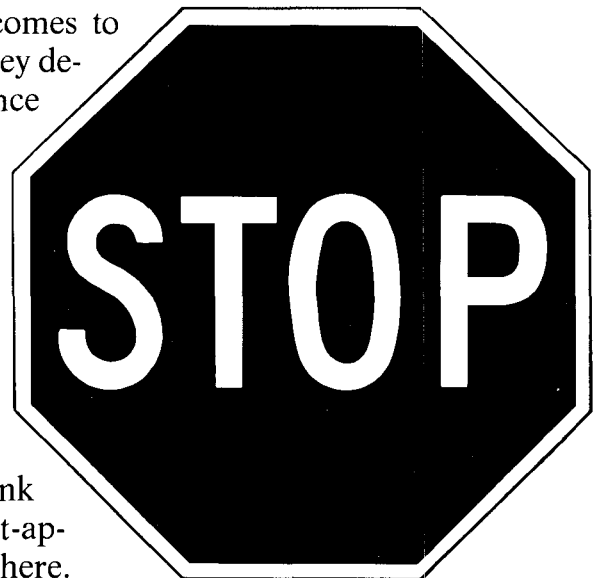


Somebody is watching out for you.

Manufacturers of vehicles are careful when it comes to choosing the tires that come with their products. They demand tires that complement a vehicle's performance characteristics. These tires are called O.E., for "original equipment."

To win a manufacturer's O.E. approval, tires must undergo rigorous tests: wet and dry traction, tread life, rolling resistance, noise, durability, ride comfort, and more. A tire has to pass *all* the tests to win O.E. approval. Only a minority of tires ever do. The letters O.E. are not stamped on the tires that have earned this credential, though, so be sure to ask.

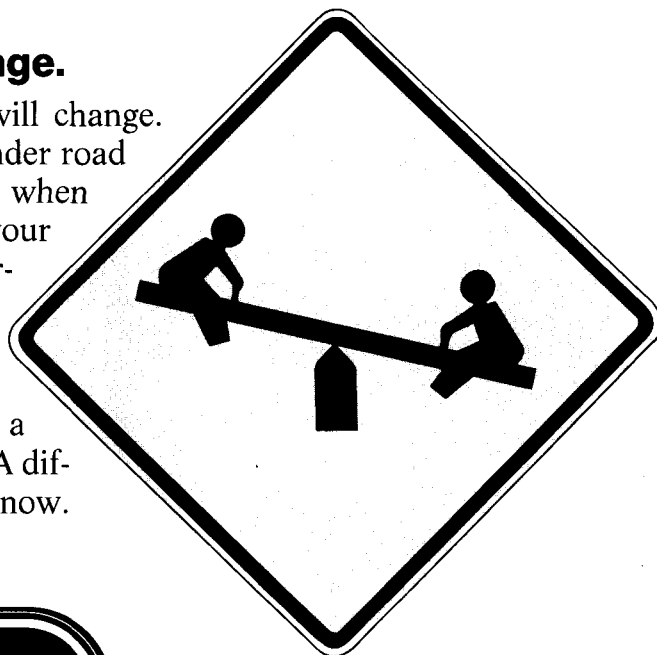
When you're thinking of buying new tires, think about buying the kind that are original-equipment-approved for your vehicle. Maybe you can stop right there.



Nothing is permanent except change.

Over time, of course, your driving needs will change. You may find yourself doing a lot of driving under road or weather conditions that you didn't foresee when you bought the vehicle. Another member of your family may begin driving it, and using it differently. At the same time, the vehicle is aging and you may be thinking of trading it in.

These are all reasons why the next time you replace your tires you may want to make a change from the vehicle's original equipment. A different kind of tire may better meet your needs now.



our sign?



Something for everybody.

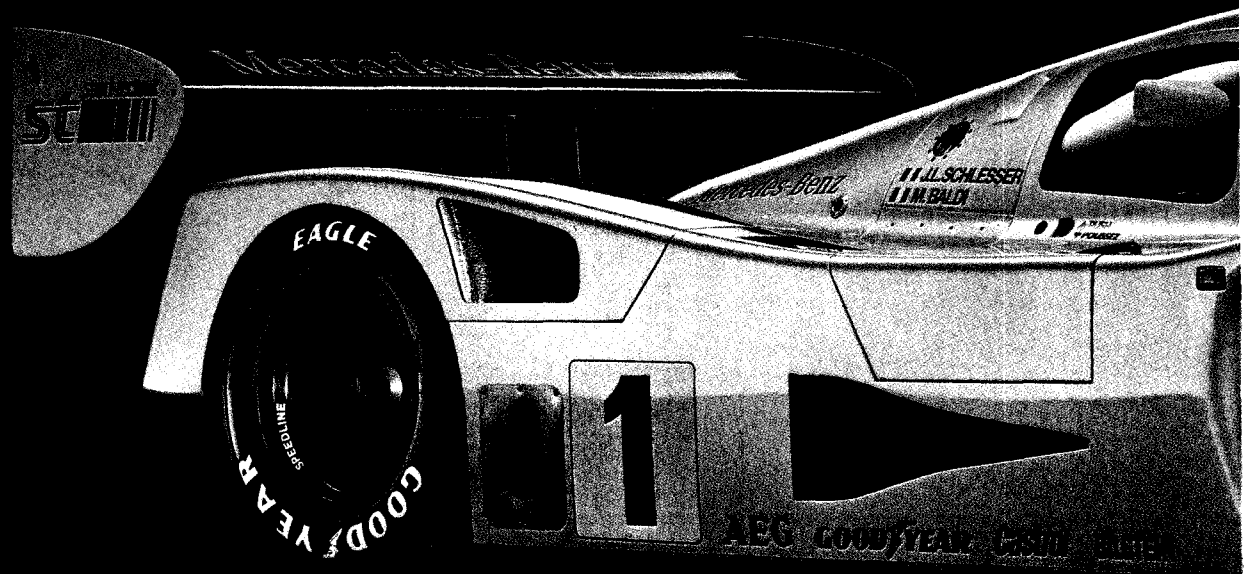
It's a question of finding the right compromise between responsiveness on dry roads and traction on wet roads. Between long tread life and optimum grip for cornering, accelerating, and braking. Between real-world driving conditions and real-world economics.

And yet there is no such thing as a best tire for all needs. Any of several may offer you advantages, depending on the unique characteristics that make up your driving pattern. But, thank heavens, choosing tires is not some mystical process like astrology. A tire expert can help you make an informed choice.

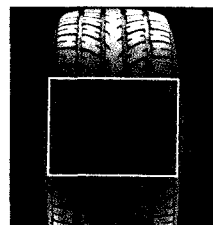
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GOODYEAR

O N L Y O N



***The World Championship-winning
Mercedes-Benz team now uses only one
make of tires: Goodyear Eagles.***



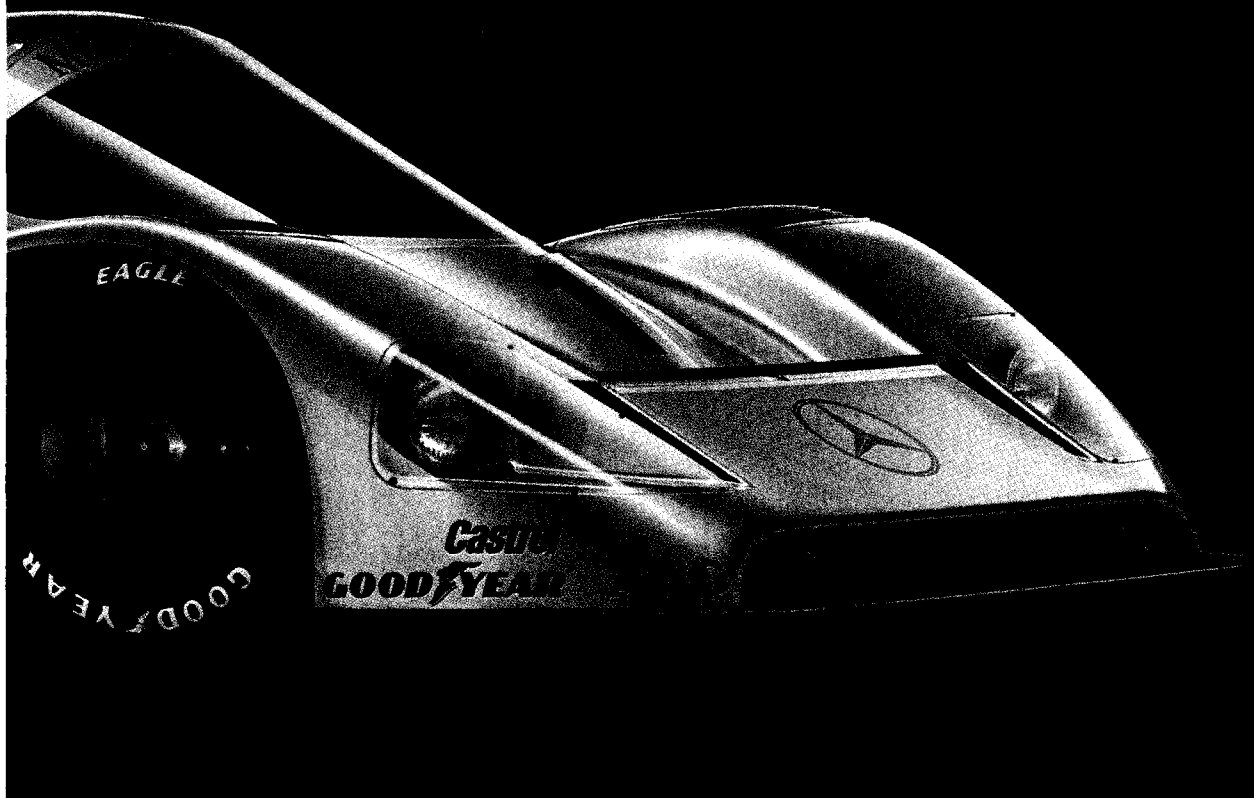
*A Goodyear Eagle
"contact patch." Where
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its superiority.*

Mercedes-Benz is known throughout the world for quality, technical innovation and engineering brilliance.

Nowhere are all of those qualities more apparent than in the highly exotic and very sophisticated Championship-winning Mercedes-Benz race cars.

These are the cars that, in 1989, won seven of the eight endurance races that constitute the FIA

EAGLES.



World Sports-Prototype Championship.

These are the cars that set new records at the 1989 running of the 24 Hours of LeMans.

In spite of these successes, these cars have now, in 1990, changed to Goodyear Eagle racing radials.

And are pursuing the 1990 World Championship on Goodyear Eagle racing radials. Exclusively.

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Built to perform at the outer edges of tire technology, these tires are designed with a knowledge,

experience and skill that no other tire company possesses.

That knowledge, together with our selection for world-beating cars like the Mercedes-Benz C11, are just two of the reasons why we say:

The best tires in the world have Goodyear written all over them.

GOODYEAR

*The best tires in the world
have Goodyear written all over them.*

REPORTS & COMMENT

NOTES

Name That Dune

*The power of the
Board on Geographic Names
reaches everywhere*

I HAVE ALWAYS considered it to be one of life's annoying little mysteries that Pikes Peak is spelled without an apostrophe. Obviously, Pikes Peak was named after somebody named Pike—Zebulon Pike, as it happens, who discovered the mountain in 1806. So why not *Pike's* Peak?

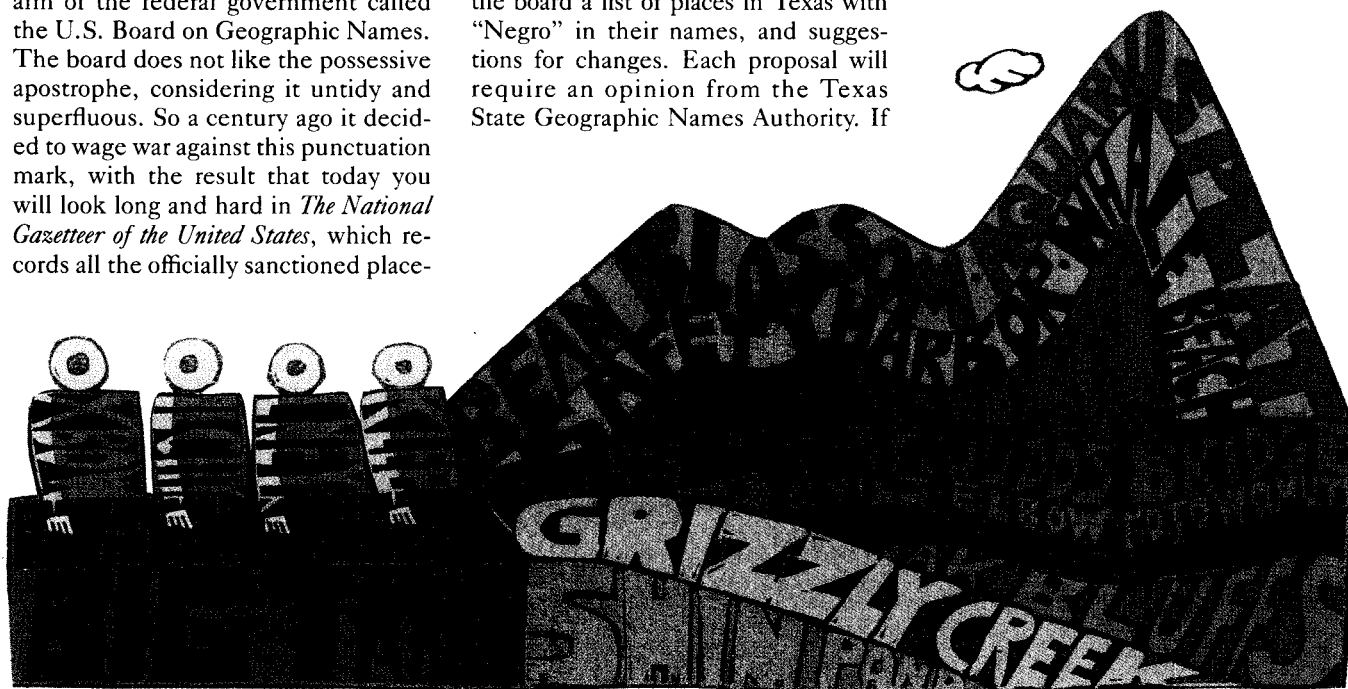
The responsibility for this bit of geographical irritation lies with an obscure arm of the federal government called the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. The board does not like the possessive apostrophe, considering it untidy and superfluous. So a century ago it decided to wage war against this punctuation mark, with the result that today you will look long and hard in *The National Gazetteer of the United States*, which records all the officially sanctioned place-

names in the country, before you find one. (Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, has one of the few remaining apostrophes, which seems to have survived by accident.)

During the 1960s the board began to eliminate names considered racially derogatory, ultimately forcing the revision of a hundred or more names containing such words as "nigger" and "Jap." The board recently acceded, for example, to the proposal of a Chinese-American tourist from Hawaii who was offended by the name of a spring in Yellowstone National Park. So Chinamans Spring (no apostrophe) became Chinese Spring. A while back Nigger Creek, Texas, became Negro Creek. "Negro," of course, itself soon became objectionable, and Gary Bledsoe, the president of the Austin, Texas, branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has sent the board a list of places in Texas with "Negro" in their names, and suggestions for changes. Each proposal will require an opinion from the Texas State Geographic Names Authority. If

the feature is on federal land, an investigation will be conducted. Toponymic researchers will perform a background check. The proposal will be scrutinized in light of the board's publication *Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names*. Only then will a decision be rendered.

AS YOU ARE perhaps beginning to realize, there is a lot more to the business of naming places, and a lot more naming and renaming going on, than most people would suspect. While it would be an exaggeration to say that the lights at the Board on Geographic Names burn late into the night, the board's business is fairly brisk. At a recent meeting of the board's Committee on Domestic Names (there is also a Committee on Foreign Names, and there was until

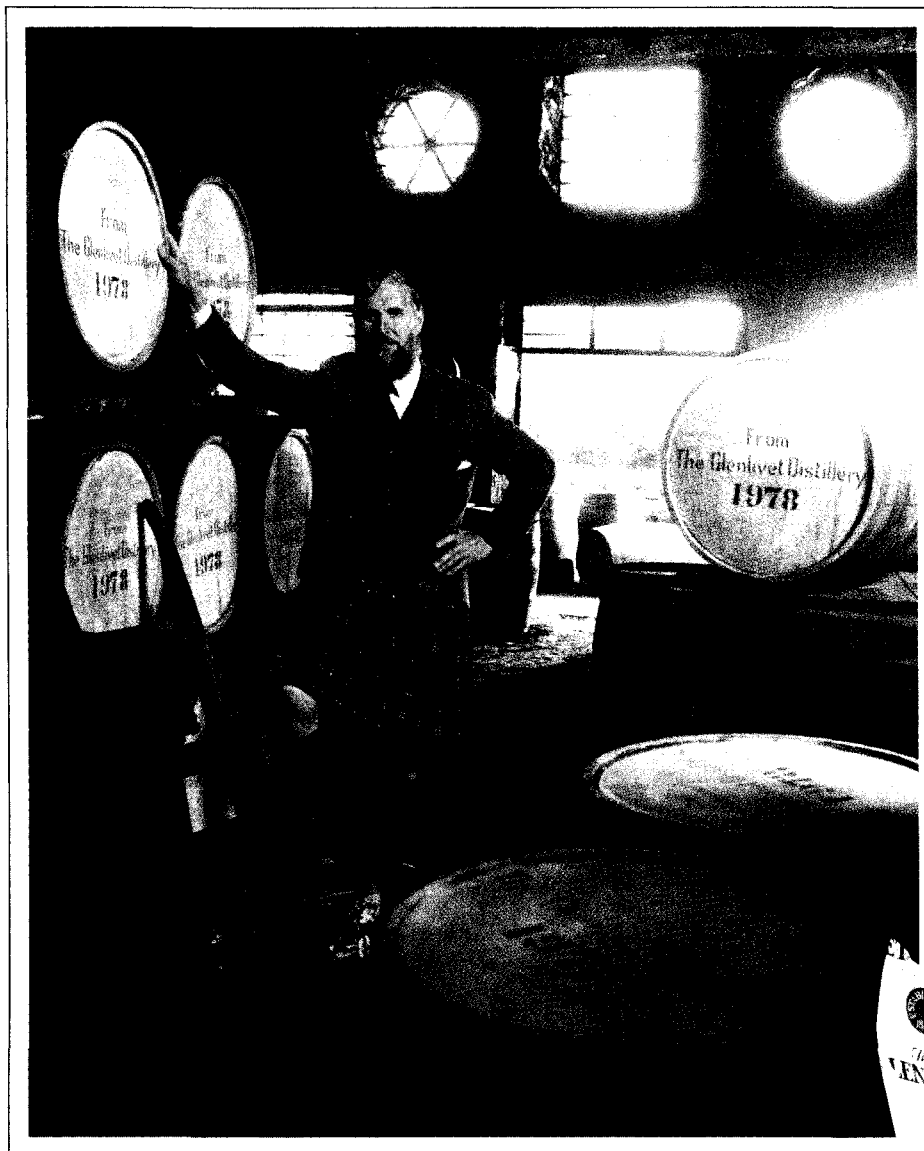




*“Our whisky that’s going into the casks right now
won’t be ready to drink until the year 2002.*

*(In the meantime, I can highly recommend
The Glenlivet® from the years 1824 through 1978.)”*

*—Sandy Milne,
our Resident Sage.*



Sandy Milne with the spirits of '78.



—What is a single malt Scotch?—

A single malt is Scotch the way it was originally: one single whisky, from one single distillery. Not, like most Scotch today, a blend of many whiskies. The Glenlivet single malt Scotch whisky should therefore be compared to a château-bottled wine. Blended Scotch is more like a mixture of wines from different vineyards.

The law in Scotland says that Scotch whisky can be sold once it reaches the age of three.

The law at The Glenlivet Distillery, however, says that our single malt whisky shall remain aging serenely in its casks until it is 12 years old.

So our 1990 whisky won't be available until 2002.

It will then be, in the words of our own Sandy Milne, “Subtle, elegant, slightly smoky, with a mellow, rounded taste. Oh, glory be, the original, Highland mountain dew!”

But then Sandy says that every year.



**The Glenlivet.
The Father of All Scotch.**

1979, when its work was taken on by the International Astronomical Union, an Advisory Committee on Extraterrestrial Features) no fewer than forty-three proposed new names and name changes or emendations were considered. Most were routinely approved. The committee agreed to the name Anxiety Ridge for a peak in Alaska. Mummy Mountain, a new name proposed by Bonnie Butler, of Fort Laramie, Wyoming, won approval, as did a request by the U.S. Geological Survey's National Mapping Division to set the record straight on the spelling of Seven-Fingered Jack, the name of a mountain in the state of Washington. Henceforward Jack will still have seven fingers, but no hyphen. Ralph M. Faust, of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, did not fare as well as the others. His proposal to give the name Wildflower Creek to a hitherto anonymous stream in Coeur d'Alene National Forest raised a red flag. "Mr. Faust is preparing a book on wildflowers in the Idaho panhandle and wishes to name this stream in order to identify several species by geographic location," the staff report said. It went on to note that the Idaho State Geographic Names Board "feels that the desire of publishing a wildflower book is not reason enough for naming this stream and therefore rejected the proposal." A distinct feeling of schoolmarmish satisfaction rippled through the room as the proposal went down to defeat. Order had been maintained.

The maintenance of order is exactly what President Benjamin Harrison seems to have had in mind when he created the board, in September of 1890, the very year that the Superintendent of the U.S. Census declared, in effect, that the American frontier was closed. There is no evidence that the two events were related, but Harrison's action has about it the feel of a tidying up. Over the years miners, explorers, surveyors, and others had given conflicting names to many features. The board's job was to sort through the mess. This work became especially important when, in 1928, the U.S. Geological Survey began to produce a new series of detailed maps of the entire United States, a task that will require some 55,000 maps in all. Now, on the eve of its centennial, the board is still trying to set things straight.

The members of the Committee on

Domestic Names are representatives of the surprisingly numerous parts of the U.S. government that have an interest in place-names. There are people from the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior, the Library of Congress, the Government Printing Office, and, of course, the U.S. Postal Service. All are mid-level bureaucrats to whom, perhaps, the monthly committee meetings offer some slight relief from the humdrum work of federal administration. They are, however, quite serious about their job.

Most of the committee's day-to-day chores are done by Donald J. Orth, the executive secretary, who is soon to retire, and by Roger Payne and his six-person staff at the U.S. Geological Survey's Branch of Geographic Names. (Orth and Payne are both past presidents of the American Name Society, the leading professional and academic organization in the field.) Like his colleagues on the committee, Payne maintains an air of professional detachment about his work. He is mildly surprised that anybody would take an interest in it and seems genuinely bemused by the passions that naming occasionally arouses. When I spoke with Payne one day at his office, at the Geological Survey's headquarters, in Reston, Virginia, he was bringing himself up to date on one of the board's oldest cases.

In 1896 a man named William Andrews Dickey emerged from the Alaskan wilderness and announced that he had discovered a large mountain, which he had named in honor of President-elect William McKinley, the champion of the gold standard. (Dickey, not coincidentally, was a prospector.) That name, however, violated the board's strict rule against commemorating living people; as a result, Mount McKinley did not show up on any federal maps. After McKinley was assassinated, in 1901, he got his mountain.

Agitation for change seems to have begun almost immediately, thanks to the efforts of Hudson Stuck, the Episcopal archdeacon of the Yukon. A member of the first expedition known to have scaled the mountain's summit, in 1913, he began lobbying for official recognition of the name used by the local Athabaskan Indians—Denali ("the Big One"). The campaign remained a sometime thing until 1975, when an official request was made by the Alaska state legislature. The Committee on

Domestic Names probably would have been happy to go along but for the intervention of Representative Ralph S. Regula, who happens to represent McKinley's old district, covering Stark County, Ohio. Regula also happens to be the ranking member of the congressional subcommittee that oversees the budget of the U.S. Department of the Interior, which happens to spend a great deal of money in Alaska. Regula is firmly of the opinion that Mount McKinley is a fine name. Every year he introduces legislation to that effect.

On Payne's desk when I visited him were the minutes of a meeting of the Alaska State Geographic Names Board, which summarized a letter from Alaska's Senator Ted Stevens pointing up the inadvisability of continuing, for the present, the pro-Denali crusade. But the state board intended to ask the national board to reconsider its policy of refusing to rule on name proposals when there is related legislation (such as Regula's) before Congress. Payne can only smile. It is beyond the power, or the desire, of the committee to quarrel with anybody in Congress.

The latest bit of excitement, Payne told me, concerns a previously unnamed mountain in Idaho that the committee, with the support of both Idaho senators, James A. McClure and Steve Symms, agreed to name Donaldson Peak, in honor of the late Charles R. Donaldson, a justice of the Idaho Supreme Court. The decision elicited a contemptuous professional reprimand from Jeff Ford, the chairman of the Idaho Geographic Names Advisory Council, who wrote,

There was virtually no reason as listed in the guidelines for naming a geographic site for the late Justice Donaldson. . . . There is no local name usage, there is no connection to the site by the person commemorated (except that it has been said that his law clerk was on top of the named mountain at the time Donaldson died of a heart attack in the YMCA swimming pool).

The persistence of cases like these give Payne and his staff a certain sense of serenity about the future. The last of the Geological Survey's 55,000 maps will roll off the presses within the next year or two, but this hardly means that the naming and renaming will cease. This, after all, is America . . . or is it?

—Steven Lagerfeld

We've been coming here since we
first got married. Back then,
we couldn't even bring a tent.
We'd just spread out our sleeping
bags, look up at the stars and
plan our future and we fell asleep.
That was twenty children ago.
Then, one night last summer, our
son James got out his sleeping
bag, looked it over in the darkness,
couldn't get it set up.
It was a beautiful night, so we
all pulled out our bags and
went to him. Just went the night
under the stars together.
Reminded me of old times.

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For 78 years, L. L. Bean has offered durable, practical products for men and women who love the outdoors.

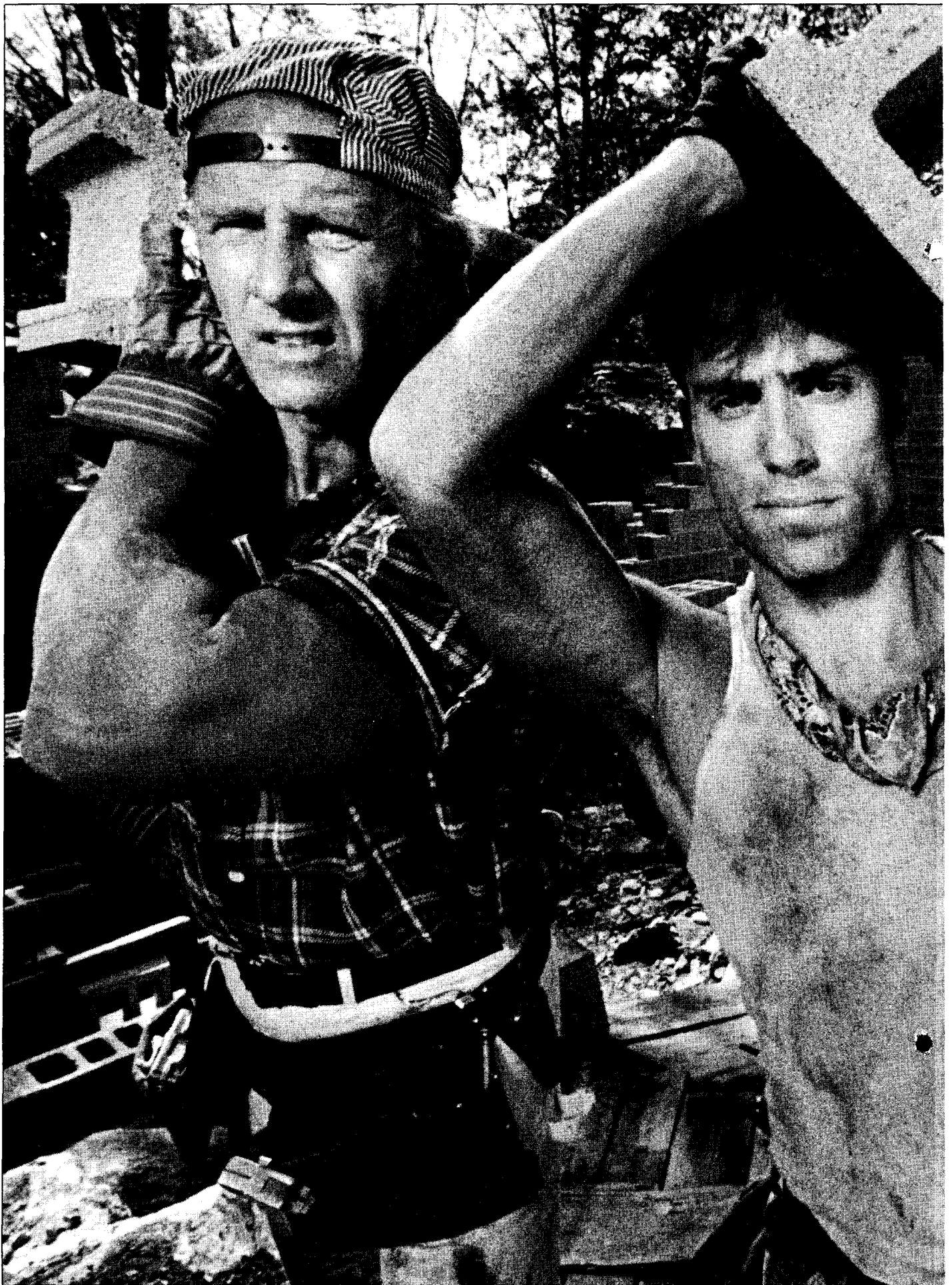
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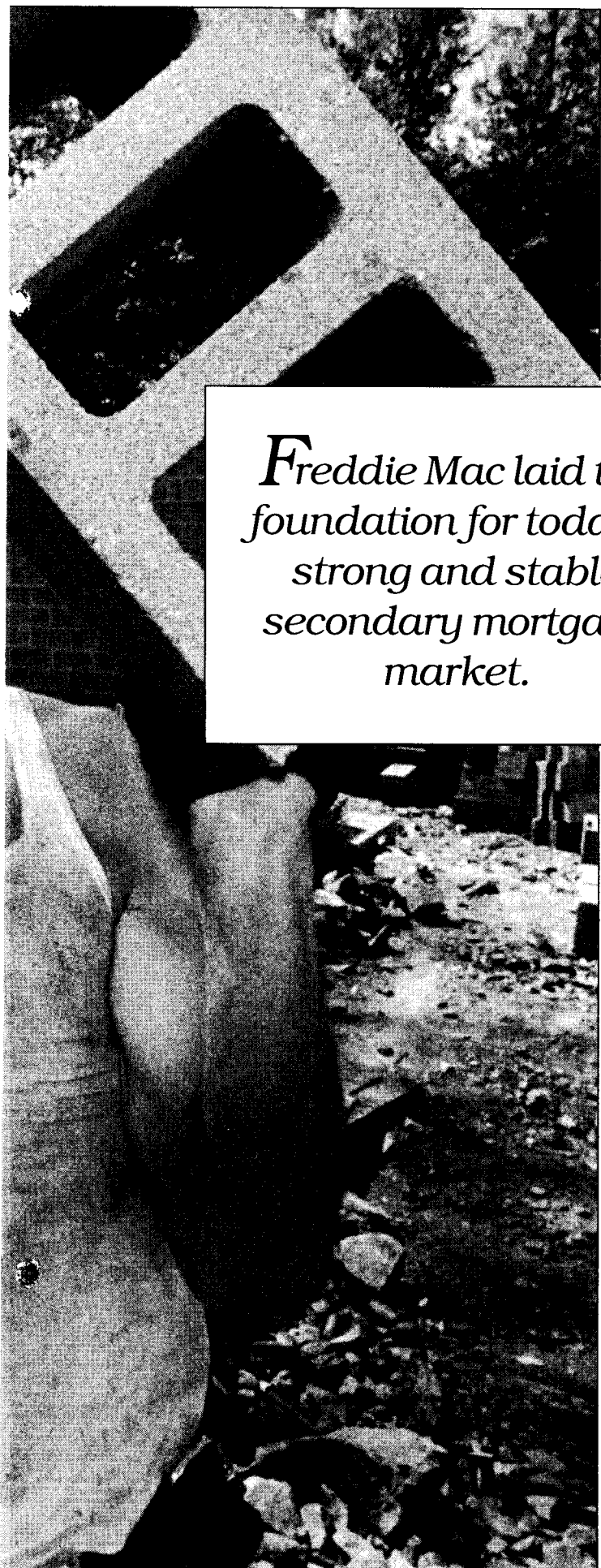


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Freddie Mac laid the foundation for today's strong and stable secondary mortgage market.

As the secondary mortgage market grew, Freddie Mac continued to be a leading innovator, introducing a variety of new products to meet changes in interest-rate cycles and capital market conditions. This year saw the debut of Freddie's latest enhancement, the popular Gold PC.SM By reducing the payment delay 30 days, Freddie Mac has made the Gold PC the fastest mortgage passthrough security.

As a result of Freddie's consistent ability to meet investor needs through innovation, the company has compiled an impressive financial record: 20 straight years of continuous growth, plus 80 straight quarters of profitability.

For investors who value a safe but forward-looking investment, there's no steadier prospect.

For more information, call the Freddie Mac investor hotline at (800) 336-FMPC.

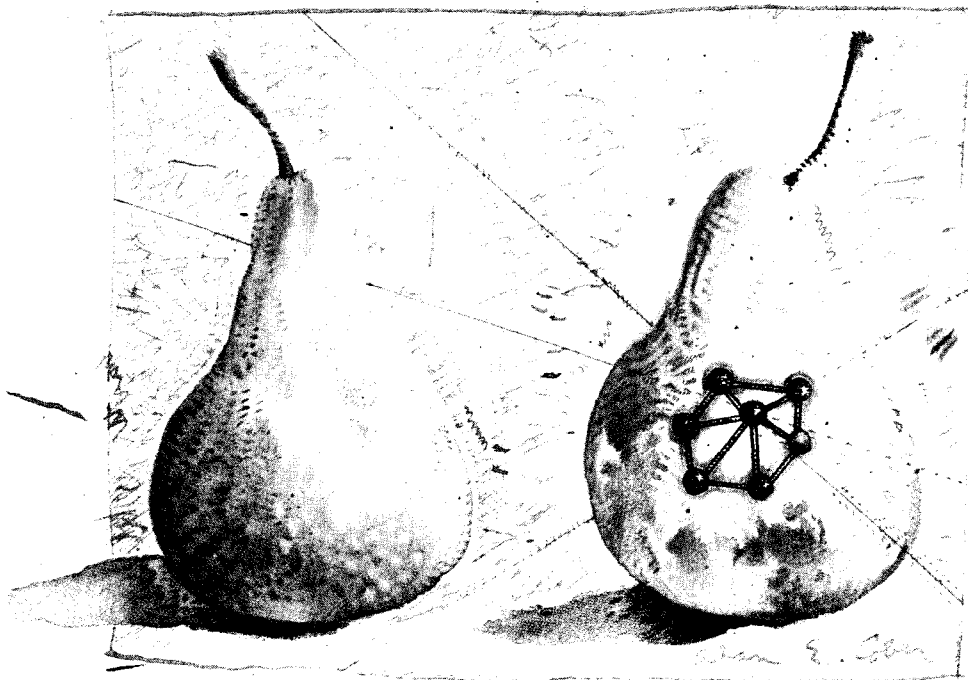
THE IDEA BEHIND ONE IN EIGHT

AMERICAN HOMES



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STEADY FREDDIE



PUBLIC HEALTH

Food Irradiation

*Emotional opposition persists
in the face of scientific evidence that
the process is harmless*

WHEN THE Food and Drug Administration announced, last May, its approval of irradiation to kill salmonella and other harmful bacteria in poultry, the only uncertainty about the poultry industry's response lay in what reason it would provide for declining the FDA's invitation to use the process. The rationale that industry spokesmen gave—citing food irradiation's poor public image rather than concerns about its safety—accurately reflects the degree of public confusion about the process. In declining to impugn food irradiation's wholesomeness, the spokesmen concurred with the widespread assumption among scientists that the process is safe. They were also correct in acknowledging that most laymen would rather depend on proper cooking to kill salmonella than eat irradiated poultry. "The issue," said Roger Coleman, of the National Food Processors Association, "is consumer acceptance."

Food irradiation works by exposing food to beams or isotopes of ionizing energy, which split molecules of organisms within the food that cause disease, spoilage, or other forms of deterioration. If enough molecules are split, the organisms die. Meanwhile, the energy passes through the food, leaving it otherwise relatively unchanged. Food-irradiation advocates cite substantial evidence that low doses of radiation can destroy the salmonella bacteria that infest up to half the poultry now marketed in the United States, kill trichina in pork, wipe out harmful insects and microorganisms that infest some fruits and vegetables, kill parasites in fish, inhibit sprouting in potatoes and onions, and delay spoilage in a variety of foods, all while affecting taste and nutritional content only slightly. The advocates say that at higher radiation exposures—above the level currently approved by the FDA—food can be sterilized (for consumption, say, by hospital patients whose immune systems have been seriously damaged) and it can be given a nearly indefinite shelf life without refrigeration. In some instances irradiation could replace toxic pesticides. For example, the Hawaiian papaya industry, which slumped after the Environmental Protection Agency banned a chemical defumigant called ethylene dibromide, used in fruit-fly disinfestation, actively backed irradiation as an alternative. Irradiation's most ardent supporters even

maintain that the process could combat hunger in Third World countries, by reducing food losses due to spoilage. While that may be claiming too much, thirty-seven nations, including such poor countries as China and Bangladesh, have approved the process, and of those, twenty-four are using it.

Most opposition to food irradiation is visceral. It starts from the assumption that radiation, frequently a lethal agent, cannot possibly affect food in safe ways. Considering that radiation is linked to such symbolic and literal disasters as Hiroshima, Three Mile Island, and Chernobyl, the power of that assumption is undeniable, even if food irradiation has nothing but radioactivity in common with atomic bombs and nuclear reactors. Fear of radiation has provoked a segment of the public to resist the process, and the dispute thus chiefly pits experts who support food irradiation against laymen who oppose it. Instead of grappling with the details of scientific inquiry, the coalition of anti-nuclear activists, organic-food advocates, and holistic-health practitioners who compose the organized opposition to food irradiation habitually make startling but invariably hollow claims of conspiracy. For instance, Denis Mosgofian, the former director of the San Francisco-based National Coalition to Stop Food Irradiation, charged in 1987 that during her two-and-a-half-year tenure as Secretary of Health and Human Services, Margaret Heckler, a longtime food-irradiation advocate, "headed up the entire process of getting food irradiation through FDA." That unsubstantiated allegation, with its implication that Heckler influenced the FDA's decision-making process, overlooks the facts that the report establishing the FDA's pro-irradiation policy was written nearly three years before Heckler became Secretary, and that the FDA's final rule on fruits and vegetables—the agency's most significant food-irradiation rule of the 1980s—was announced after her departure.

Opponents have also resorted to colorful antics to draw attention to their cause. In 1987, when a Canadian parliamentary committee was considering the future of food irradiation, a man wearing a chicken suit strolled through downtown Toronto handing out anti-irradiation leaflets. In October of that year, when a proponent tried to display

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canned irradiated chicken to television cameras during a food-irradiation debate in Washington, D.C., an opponent slipped a drawing of a skull and crossbones onto the table. But while such ploys reflect the opponents' flair for public relations, they shed little light on a process that may possess considerable benefit for mankind.

OF THE HUNDREDS of scientists in this country who have done extensive research on the wholesomeness of food irradiation, only a few have publicly expressed opposition to it, and the several other scientists who are actively against food irradiation are not experienced in the field. This consensus almost certainly exists because the preponderance of evidence refutes the opposition's claims. Not even the most ardent food-irradiation opponent argues that the process makes food radioactive, but, as radiation chemistry has shown, irradiation does create tiny numbers of molecules known as radiolytic products—formed when the ionizing energy from a radioactive isotope or a linear accelerator splits food molecules, creating new ones. The argument over food irradiation's wholesomeness essentially turns on whether these radiolytic products, or RPs, are hazardous when eaten.

In defending food irradiation's safety, an FDA committee in 1980 cited data showing that a low radiation dose would generate RPs in a ratio of no more than thirty parts per million. Of those thirty parts, about 90 percent have been identified as identical to natural food components and therefore presumably safe. Of the remaining 10 percent of the RPs—or three parts per million—most have been found to be chemically similar to natural food components. Their understanding of the composition of equivalent natural food led the researchers to conclude that if the remaining RPs harbored any significantly toxic substances, these existed in quantities so small—a few parts per billion—as to be harmless. Such levels, they said, were undetectable in state-of-the-art toxicological tests. In addition, FDA officials now maintain, they are comparable to the quantity of significantly toxic substances known to exist, harmlessly, in some nonirradiated foods. The FDA officials assert that only one significantly toxic RP, benzene, has ever been identified, and

that was in meat irradiated at a dose more than fifteen times as great as that now approved by the FDA. According to George H. Pauli, an FDA consumer-safety officer who has supervised the agency's food-irradiation deliberations, the amount of benzene in the irradiated meat was 100 times less than that found in nonirradiated eggs.

Both sides cite various toxicological tests to support their conclusions, but all such tests have limited usefulness when applied to food irradiation. A standard toxicological evaluation of a food additive entails supplementing test animals' diets with the additive in quantities far greater than those to be used in practice, to find the maximum quantity that produces no ill effects; that quantity is then divided by a safety factor, usually 100, to determine the amount of the additive allowable in human diets. But with food irradiation the "additive" is the food itself, and no animal would be able to eat the quantity of irradiated food required to find the no-effect level. Or, if the animal were fed one kind of irradiated food out of proportion to its normal intake of that food, the study might produce ill effects caused not by irradiation but by the test diet's nutritional imbalance. Scientists have tried to get around these limitations by defining the additive as RPs, which are, after all, what distinguishes irradiated food, but this approach also has drawbacks: RPs exist in such low concentrations that the needed excess cannot be supplied, and in any event many RPs have not even been identified. For all these reasons toxicological testing can do no more than provide rough indicators of irradiated food's safety.

Even so, opponents claim to have found a smoking gun in a set of studies conducted by the National Institute of Nutrition in Hyderabad, India, in the early 1970s. Referring to evidence that malnutrition could increase one's vulnerability to the toxicity of drugs, scientists at NIN devised a study to test the effect of irradiated food on severely underfed children. Three groups of five children, all two- to five-year-olds suffering from a disease of malnutrition called kwashiorkor, were hospitalized and rehabilitated. One group was fed freshly irradiated wheat, one received wheat irradiated and then stored for twelve weeks, and one got nonirradiated wheat. The study's authors stated

that four of the five children in the first group developed polyploidy, a chromosomal abnormality that may cause cancer, while children in the second group displayed far fewer polyploid cells, and children in the third group showed none. The authors concluded, "These observations clearly indicate that the appearance of polyploid cells is due to the feeding of irradiated wheat." They recommended storage of irradiated wheat "for periods beyond twelve weeks, before it can be considered safe for human consumption." Other NIN studies showed polyploidy or lethal mutations in animals fed irradiated wheat.

However, the studies' conclusions conflicted with the findings of similar experiments on rats and mice conducted at the Bhabha Atomic Research Center, in Bombay, and so the Indian Ministry of Health asked two independent scientists to identify reasons for the discrepancy. After examining the two sets of studies, the scientists harshly criticized the NIN studies. The number of polyploid cells found in the children fed freshly irradiated wheat "is well within the normal range of occurrence in healthy human beings," they said, whereas the number of polyploid cells found before the studies began—none—contradicted the conventional understanding that all human beings have some polyploid cells. The scientists also questioned the studies' claim that in the two children who were examined after they had stopped eating the irradiated wheat, all abnormal cells disappeared within twenty-four weeks. Such cells, the scientists said, should continue to exist for years. These and other problems led the scientists to conclude that "the bulk of the NIN data are not only mutually contradictory but also are at variance with the well established facts of biology."

The scientists' critique led the Indian government unconditionally to accept irradiated-wheat products. And other food-policy-making agencies around the world, including the FDA, dismissed the NIN studies as a product of bad science. Michael G. Simic, a research chemist at the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Center for Radiation Research and a professor independent in the food-irradiation controversy, speaks for most scientists who have worked in the field when he calls the NIN studies "discredited."

Opponents of irradiation usually respond that those who disparage the NIN studies have an overriding interest in promoting food irradiation.

Opponents also charge that processing plants using isotopes as radiation sources pose unacceptable health risks to nearby residents. Exposure to the isotopes used in irradiation can indeed be lethal. For that reason each plant's isotopes, customarily sheathed in stainless-steel capsules, are stored in a cell surrounded by cement walls five or six feet thick, which absorb radioactive energy. Products needing exposure are rolled into the cell on a conveyer belt. Workers enter the cell only when the plant is not in operation and the isotopes have been mechanically lowered into a pool of water inside the cell.

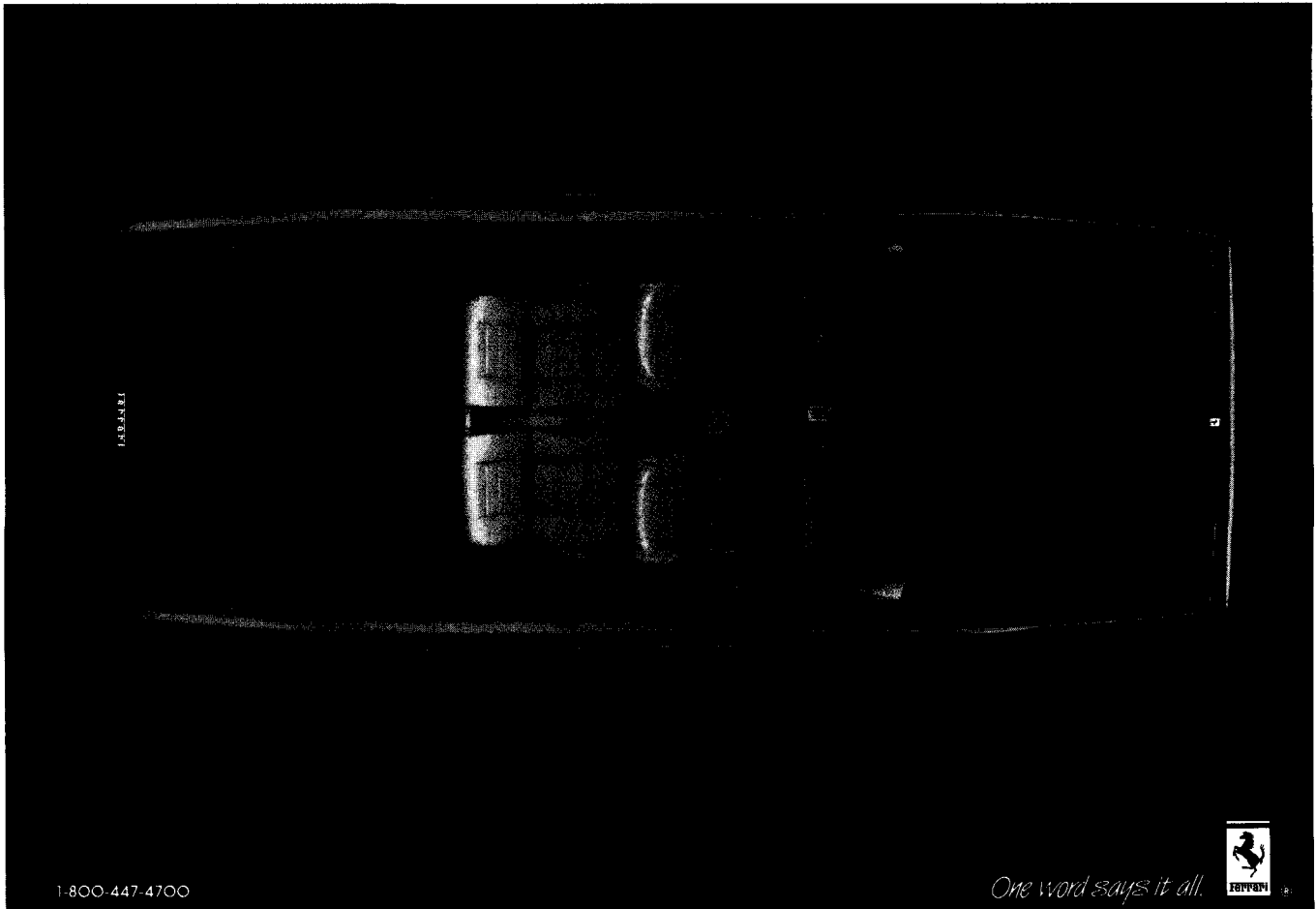
Food-irradiation opponents say that the safety record of the roughly forty American irradiation plants makes a "hall of shame," and an information manual published by the National Coalition to Stop Food Irradiation (NCSFI) cites six accidents as evidence. However, none of the accidents

is known to have caused harm to anyone outside the plant. In addition, although four of the incidents involved leaks of isotopes into the shielding pools, in each case the leaking capsules had been built using a technology no longer in use (although some of the old-style capsules are still in use). The leading current supplier of capsules, Nordion International, formerly a subsidiary of Atomic Energy of Canada, has built 25,000 capsules and delivered them around the world without experiencing a single leak.

Furthermore, if the fondest dreams of some proponents are realized, the dangers posed by isotopes will be eliminated. These proponents envision a time when linear accelerators will replace isotopes as energy sources for food irradiation; indeed, accelerators have already supplanted isotopes as sources for medical therapy units, and are used commercially in many other kinds of radiation processing. Instead of emitting radiation in all directions, accelerators generate high-intensity beams of radiation that can be as narrow as

half an inch in diameter. Moreover, a flip of a switch starts or stops generation of the beam. That means that so long as accelerators are not running, they present no danger; the difficulties of transporting, storing, and using isotopes are obviated. Cost is the biggest obstacle to expanding the use of accelerators, but recent technological advances may eventually make accelerators as cost-effective as isotopes.

THE MOST SPECTACULAR charge by critics of irradiation, recently weakened by the improvement in Soviet-American relations, is that the U.S. Department of Energy has promoted food irradiation as part of a convoluted strategy to increase the production of plutonium, thereby furthering weapons production. Mosgofian, the NCSFI's former director, went so far as to call food irradiation "the engine to drive a crucial component of the arms race." Opponents cite the DOE's role as administrator of a program, launched in 1985, to build six demonstration irradiation plants, at a



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cost of about \$32 million. Whereas most irradiation plants around the world use cobalt-60, supplied by Nordion International, as their isotope source, government planners originally hoped to use cesium-137 in the demonstration plants. Unlike cobalt-60, cesium-137 is an incidental by-product of nuclear-weapons manufacture; it is also more dangerous and less suitable for irradiation than cobalt-60.

One reason the planners were in favor of cesium is that they wished to put to use the relatively small amount that had been kept in underwater cooling tanks at Washington State's Hanford Nuclear Reservation while awaiting storage in a permanent geological repository. But opponents suspected an ulterior motive: if the demonstration plants showed that cesium was useful in food irradiation, private plant operators might demand access to another, much larger source of cesium—the spent fuel from commercial nuclear reactors. Spent fuel also contains an abundant amount of plutonium; reprocessing of the fuel, which would be necessary to extract the cesium, would be the first step toward recovering the plutonium for military use. A 1986 NCSFI publication states, "The separation processing of cesium will allow for the reprocessing of plutonium for the new generation of 17,000 warheads the Reagan Administration has requested within the next 6-7 years."

Advocates point out that the 1982 Hart-Simpson amendment to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's budget authorization bars using spent commercial fuel for military purposes, and that the DOE has shown no interest in repealing the amendment. The requisite reprocessing plants do not even exist in this country, and are not likely to for many years, if ever. In addition, the impetus for the six demonstration irradiation plants came not from the DOE, which was lukewarm toward the idea, but from Congress, where irradiation advocates regularly wrote money for the program into administration budgets. Finally, none of the planned demonstration plants specified any intention to use cesium as an energy source, and after funding constraints caused the program to be cut back, the two plants that survived chose a source other than cesium. This seems a peculiar way to operate a program intended to create a demand for cesium. Al-

though the cesium argument is without merit, it has nonetheless complicated the proponents' public-relations chore. George Giddings, an irradiation-technology consultant, correctly calls the argument "the single most inflammatory aspect of the food irradiation debate." He says, "It has fueled the controversy far beyond its significance."

The two sides are now at an impasse. On the one hand, advocates have held sway at the federal level, as the FDA's poultry rule indicates. Legislation introduced in Congress three years ago to roll back FDA food-irradiation permits and ban the import and export of irradiated food for two years never reached the floor, and enactment in the future is extremely unlikely. On the other hand, opponents have had some triumphs at the state and local levels. They have won two-year moratoriums on sales and processing of irradiated foods in New York and New Jersey, and they have obtained a permanent ban in Maine. Before the DOE's food-irradiation program was cut from six to two plants, they also blocked construction of two of the proposed facilities, first in California and later in Alaska, and they have prevented private irradiation companies from building plants in several cities. Most important, the opponents' success in depicting food irradiation as dangerous is likely to deter food companies for at least the next several years from the risk of alienating consumers by embracing the process.

Even without the pressure from opponents, food irradiation's development would probably be slow, because of uncertainties about the efficiency of the process. DOE planners hope that their demonstration plants, both of which will use accelerators as energy sources, will resolve some of those questions. In the meantime, food-company executives seem prepared to wait. Merle Eiss, the technical-systems manager at McCormick & Company, the only food manufacturer in the country that has acknowledged using food irradiation even sparingly, says, "Consumers react very slowly to any technological change [related to food]. People thought canned food was poison, and fifty years passed before anybody would eat it. Some people around the country still don't like to drink pasteurized milk."

—Jacques Leslie

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When I sat down to create the bottle for my new "Cassini" fragrance, I was inspired by these masters of the art—as well as by my Russian heritage. When you look at the highly individualistic bottle that houses "Cassini" you see an original glass sculpture with an Asiatic feeling that is tempered by my Western background. Very sensual, but also very subtle.

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CASSINI



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A photograph of the late Princess Zita, the last Hapsburg Empress, seen through a shop window in Vienna

AUSTRIA

Second Try

Austria has faced—and overcome—many of the challenges that now face Eastern Europe

IN VIENNA, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart rates a statue, an alley, and a square. Karl Lueger is honored with a bigger statue, a bigger square, and the most august section of the Ringstrasse, the Dr. Karl Lueger Ring, which is the site of Austria's parliament, the university, the Burgtheater, the town hall, and the Volksgarten, a large park. Lueger, who was Vienna's mayor at the turn of the century, is, together with another Austrian politician of the same period, Georg von Schönerer, one of the fathers of modern anti-Semitism. "I regard this man as the greatest German mayor of all times," Adolf Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*. "If Dr. Karl Lueger had lived in Germany, he would have been ranked among the great minds of our people." Upon receiving the news of an election victory by Lueger in 1895, Theodor Herzl, a

Paris-based Viennese journalist and the father of Zionism, drew up a plan for a Jewish exodus from Europe.

Lueger, Von Schönerer, and Herzl are the central figures in Carl E. Schorske's famous essay "Politics in a New Key: An Austrian Triptych," originally published in 1967. These three men, in Schorske's view, expressed (in different ways) an abrasive, reactive, "post-rational" type of politics that "constituted part of the wider cultural revolution that ushered in the twentieth century"—and that contributed mightily to Europe's social and political disintegration. (Austria, as the nineteenth-century poet Friedrich Hebbel once wrote, is "the little world in which the big one holds its tryouts.") The process began in Vienna in the second half of the nineteenth century, when liberalism rose to challenge a fossilized political system and ruling class. Though "strong enough to dissolve the old political order," Schorske wrote, "liberalism could not master the social forces which that dissolution released." Vienna at the time was flooded with immigrant laborers from throughout the Hapsburg Empire, which encompassed all of present-day Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, and parts of Germany (until 1866), Ita-

ly, Yugoslavia, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Romania. Once freed of the empire's autocratic shackles, these masses proved ready not, as the liberals had hoped, for a tolerant social democracy but for various kinds of exclusivist nationalisms, as well as a virulent anti-Semitism.

The situation seems somehow familiar. In Eastern Europe today, and particularly in the Balkans, political liberation has begotten many narrow nationalist movements among peoples who lack the moderation that comes of middle-class prosperity. If the Austria of fifty or a hundred years ago showed where Central and Eastern Europe were heading, an understanding of Austria today may likewise offer hints of what's to come.

THE LUEGER monument, on Dr. Karl Lueger Square, is a stark example of fascist realism. Hand on heart, in sartorial splendor, *der schöne* Karl stares forward into the future, his eyes brimming with determination; muscular, naked-to-the-waist workers armed with shovels and pickaxes surround him on the plinth. Austrians justify the monument by pointing out that Lueger built Vienna's subway system, its sanitation system,

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Hungary's Western trade is with Austria, and Austria and Germany combined account for well over half of all Hungarian-Western trade. These figures achieve their full significance only when one looks at the bilateral Austrian-German economic relationship. Last year more than a third of Austria's exports went to Germany, while Austria imported 43.4 percent of its goods from its neighbor. German companies have been buying out Austrian ones. Austria makes many of the spare parts for German cars. The Austrian schilling has been pegged to the German mark since the early 1970s. The two countries are also in harmony on the issue of financial policy. Both have staunchly independent and conservative central banks that follow unyielding anti-inflation policies, to the sometime displeasure of France, the United States, and other Western countries.

All this makes the two countries natural allies. Though officials in both countries are loath to admit it, Germany and Austria, with their convergent economies, form a veritable Greater German trading bloc. A former U.S. ambassador to Austria, Henry Anatole Grunwald, calls it "a virtual economic *Anschluss*." But such an *Anschluss*, Grunwald adds, has no clear political or emotional content; Austrians state emphatically, and for the most part convincingly, that the one thing they are not is "German." As a small state that has retained a distinct identity despite the intimate economic embrace of a larger neighbor, Austria offers a seductive model to its eastern neighbors. Czechoslovakia and Hungary in particular—fellow descendants of the Hapsburg Empire—seem destined to follow Austria's example and forge close economic ties with Germany.

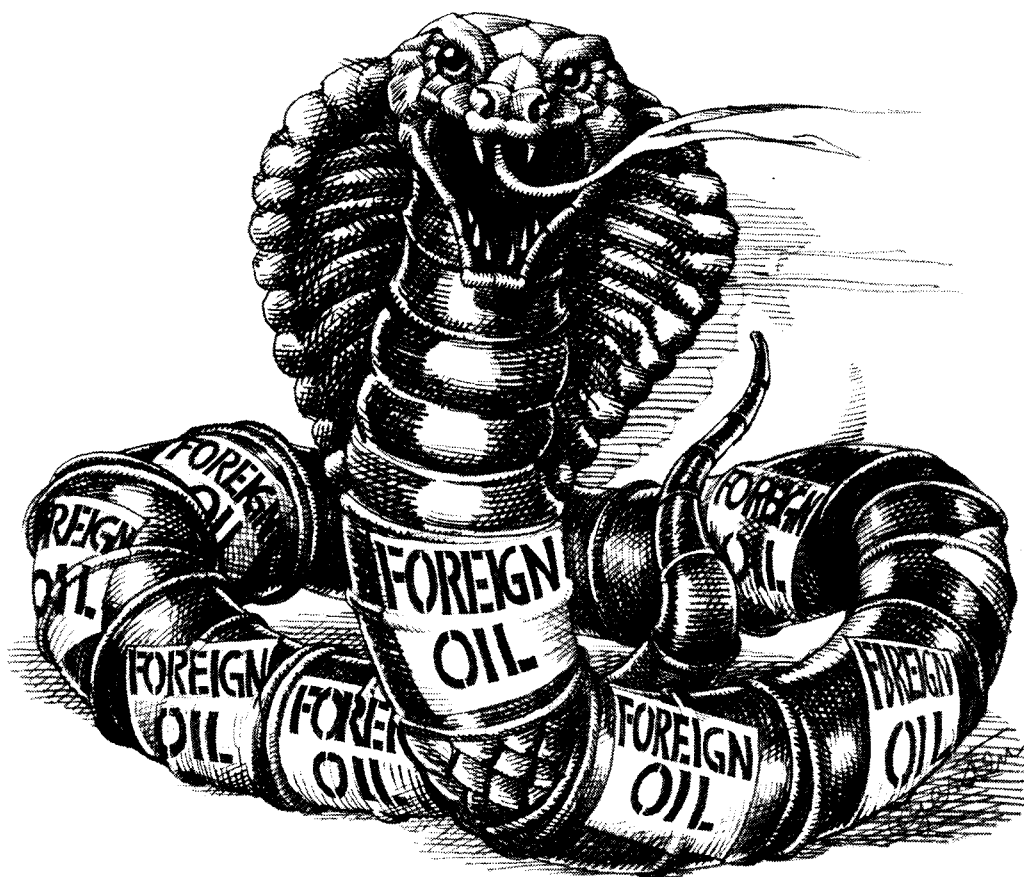
ONE SIGN that may bode well for Austria's future lies in what has been happening in the southern province of Carinthia. Carinthia is the kind of place that if it were located in Romania would doubtless be torn by bloody communal strife. Although most of the province's population is ethnically German, perhaps as many as 10 percent of the people are ethnic Slovenes, and all the time more and more Slovenes are pouring from Yugoslavia into Carinthia to shop and do business. Last year Jörg Haider, the populist leader of Austria's Freedom Party, which

in Carinthia has been associated with a movement for separate classrooms for German-speakers and Slovene-speakers, was elected governor. Carinthia is also the home of the Carinthian Heimatdienst, a group founded after the First World War and revived, with a neo-Nazi ideology, in 1955.

But the peace has not been shattered. As Simon Wiesenthal explains, "the Freedom Party can do nothing without an economic or social crisis, and such a crisis does not seem likely." In Klagenfurt, the Carinthian capital, the only slogans I saw on the streets were those for credit-card companies. Israel is brought up as just another destination favored by local sun-worshippers. Instead of the grimy, sullen-faced laborers and empty store windows that I've grown accustomed to seeing in Yugoslavia, Romania, and other Balkan states, in Klagenfurt I saw Thorstein Veblen's leisure class in a typical shopping-mall setting; Carinthia's nouveau-riche population thinks less of ancient enmities than of economic advantage. After the excited, racially biased harangues I've heard throughout the Balkans, my visit to the headquarters of the Heimatdienst proved anticlimactic. The head of the Heimatdienst, Josef Feldner, is calm and polite. He says that the idea of Greater Germany is dead and that his organization is interested only in preserving the integrity of the German language in a linguistic frontier region. Although the organization's history and literature make one uneasy, the formalities of a middle-class democracy apparently demand that even the Heimatdienst make a show of moderation.

Is Austria, as Prince Schwarzenberg believes, a "window on tomorrow"? Shortly before her death, in March of last year, the ninety-six-year-old former Hapsburg Empress, Princess Zita, said she hoped the various peoples of Central and Eastern Europe would live well. The elaborate funeral given her at Vienna's St. Stephen's Cathedral, in which prayers were read in several of the languages of the former Hapsburg Empire, appeared to express not only the Austrians' nostalgia for a relatively peaceful and racially tolerant age but also their hope for the future. And for the formerly communist nations to the east, the Austrian present is hardly the worst future to hope for.

—Robert D. Kaplan



THE KISS OF DEATH?

We now import more than 40 percent of all the oil we use, and that percentage continues to grow. This excessive dependence on foreign oil could poison America's economy and our national security if our supply were ever disrupted.

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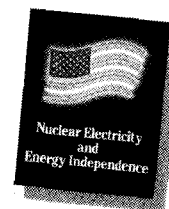
America's 112 nuclear electric plants already have cut foreign oil dependence by 4 billion barrels since the oil embargo of 1973, saving us \$115 billion in foreign oil payments.

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U.S. COUNCIL FOR ENERGY AWARENESS

Nuclear energy means more energy independence.

COIN-OP

BY RANDY COHEN

SLOUCHING OUTSIDE the 7-Eleven, my partner, Matt, looked more than usually gloomy. The "South Pacific," our best-earning phone booth—it had a prime location near the Slurpee machine—was a mess: palm fronds torn out, ship's wheel gone, the model volcano completely inoperable. The coin box had withstood the assault—not that it held enough to cover the damages. Repairs would have been easier if Ginny had chosen a more austere look, but she insisted that all three of our pay phones adhere to a unifying theme: the American musical theater. I had to admit, the customers liked it.

Ginny is my cousin. She's studying interior design on the new GI Bill. She has excellent color sense and fabulous legs, but that temper of hers nearly got her bounced out of the Navy when she went at a CPO with a tube sock full of ball bearings.

"It could be worse," Matt said. "If they'd trashed 'Kiss Me, Kate,' we'd have to dig up another Elizabethan receiver." Our first pay phone, it's just outside the bus terminal.

"Or relacquering 'The King and I'—what a hassle!" We were kidding ourselves, of course: we felt awful.

After we cleaned up, we went over to Ginny's place. She was sitting in her pickup out in the carport, impatiently tapping her long fingernails on the steering wheel. We downplayed the damage to the phone as Ginny drove; if she picks up two more points, she loses her license.

The three of us walked down the long center aisle of the vending-machine wholesaler out near the fairground, trying to ignore machines we couldn't afford, like Oxygen-to-Go, the Beef Mart, with all that great neon, the Puppy Palace. Way in back, under a tarp, there it was—Le Canard Diabolique, named 1983's most thrilling children's ride by *Canadian Coin-Op* maga-

zine. Children? Maybe brave Quebec *enfants*, but here in the States it would be strictly thirteen or over unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. I dropped a Canadian quarter in the slot—we'd have to retrofit for U.S. currency—and offered Matt a go.

"Not me," he said. "I still have that cervical vertebrae thing from Brenda." Matt's girlfriend, the JV wrestling

coach at Mt. Penn High, is an enthusiastic Latin dancer. Matt threw out his back doing the merengue, but certain people (Ginny) still snicker suggestively.

He was right to treat the duck with respect; it's some ride. At first it bobs along placidly, lulling you into false confidence. Then it's like it suddenly spots food beneath the surface—a tiny fish, a Cheerio, a Gummy Bear. The big duck dives, pitching forward nearly sixty degrees. After that it's a mallard in a hurricane, so hang on tight and remember that the owner-operator disclaims liability for personal injury.

With Le Canard strapped down in the bed of Ginny's pickup, we headed for the Oley Valley Mini-Mall, where we unloaded the duck and left Matt to hook it up. I rode back to Ginny's, collected my car, and drove down to the police station to report our vandalized phone booth; I had to for the insurance.

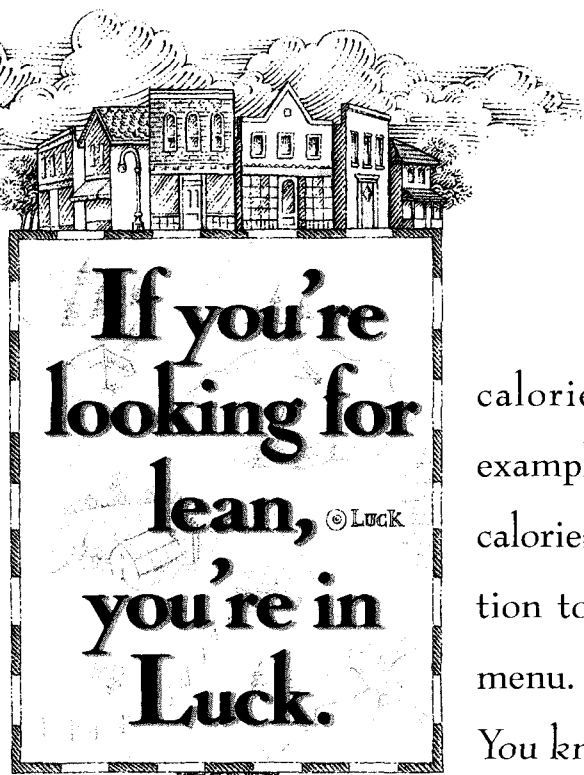
Le Canard was part of my diversification strategy. With deregulation, anyone could buy a pay phone, and people who had gone bankrupt on topless transmission centers and swim-through





I'd like to tell you a juicy story. A story everyone in Luck, Wisconsin knows. It's about herb marinated

beef steak. It's about braised steak provençal and broiled steaks with company potatoes. But most of all, it's about good fortune. Because many cuts of beef are surprisingly low in calories. Lower than most people think. A lean, trimmed three-ounce serving averages less than 200



calories. Round tip, for example, hardly tops 149 calories. That's an inspiration to anyone holding a menu. Or following a diet. You know, according-

ing to legend, the town of Luck was named by Dan Smith, an early logger. Having faced much adversity in life, he solved the problem by always being "in Luck." Today, our luck is still pretty good - delicious,

in fact. Where would we be without beef? Out of luck, I'd say. See you in the next town.



ROUND TIP 157 calories
5.9 gms total fat* (2.1 gms sat. fat)

TOP ROUND 153 calories
4.2 gms total fat* (1.4 gms sat. fat)

TOP LOIN 176 calories
8.0 gms total fat* (3.1 gms sat. fat)

EYE OF ROUND 143 calories
4.2 gms total fat* (1.5 gms sat. fat)

TENDERLOIN 179 calories
8.5 gms total fat* (3.2 gms sat. fat)

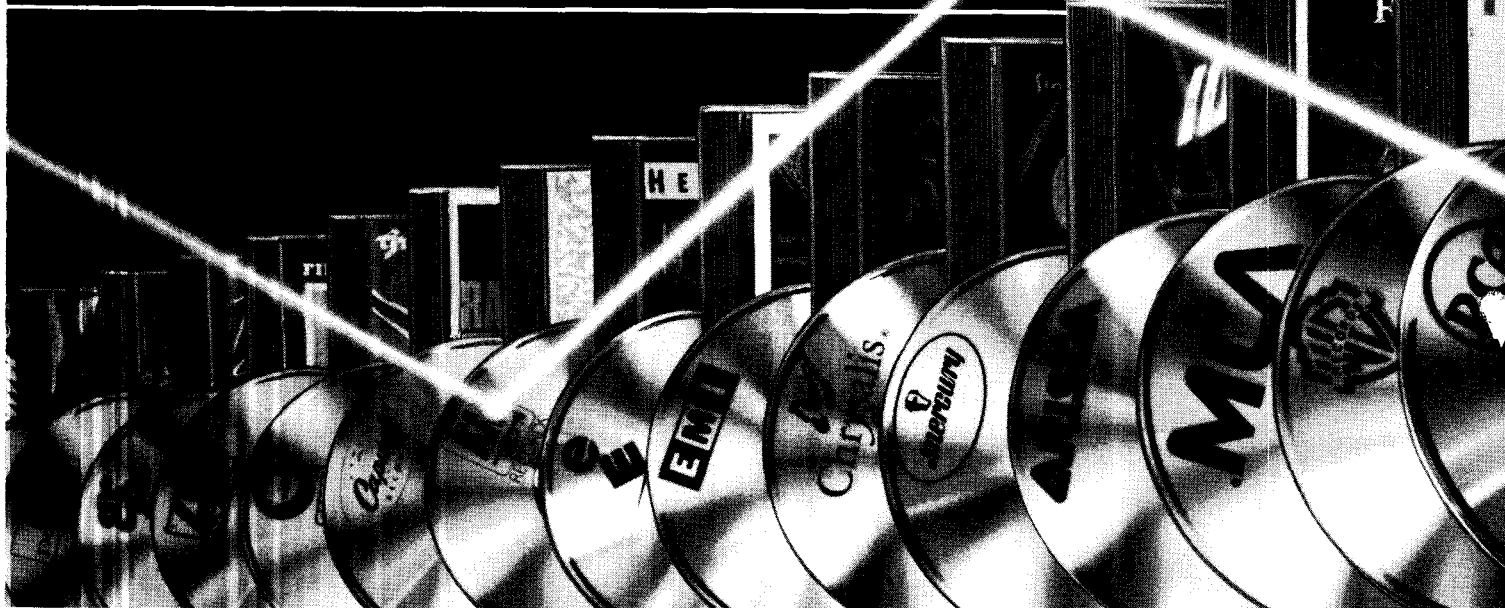
TOP SIRLOIN 165 calories
6.1 gms total fat* (2.4 gms sat. fat)

Beef.
Real food for real people.

*Sources: USDA Handbook 8-13 1000 Rev., U.S. RDA National Research Council 1080, 10th Edition. Figures are for a cooked and trimmed 3 oz. serving. 4 oz. uncooked yield 3 oz. cooked. For a beef recipe booklet, write the B.I.C., Dept. T, 444 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611. Please enclose 50¢. ©1990 Beef Industry Council and Beef Board.

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Sinead O' Connor: I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got (Chrysalis) 33512

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Milli Vanilli: Girl You Know It's True (Arista) 01048

The Church: Gold Afternoon Fix (Arista) 01064

Chick Corea Elektric Band: Inside Out (GRP) 72743

Don Henley: End Of The Innocence (Geffen) 01064

Eagles: Greatest Hits 1971-75 (Asylum) 23481

Marvin Gaye: 15 Greatest Hits (Motown) 53534

Kentucky Headhunters: Pickin' On Nashville (Mercury) 24740

The Best Of Little Anthony & The Imperials (Rhino) 33581

Tears For Fears: Seeds Of Love (Fontana) 33653

The Million Dollar Quartet (feat. Elvis, others) (RCA) 44624

Best Of John Williams/Boston Pops: By Request (Philips) 25360

The Who: Who's Better, Who's Best (MCA) 00790

Stevie Nicks: The Other Side Of The Mirror (Modern) 70946

Classic Rock, Vol. 2 (MCA) 44314

David Lanz: Cristofori's Dream (Narada) 00853

The Big Chill/Soundtrack (Motown) 33970

Pat Metheny Group: Letter From Home (Geffen) 50395

Peter Murphy: Deep (RCA) 44638

Love And Rockets (RCA) 01083

Fabulous Baker Boys/Soundtrack (GRP) 44637

The Judds: River Of Time (RCA) 01027

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Najee: Tokyo Blue (EMI) 44482

Syd Straw: Surprise (Virgin) 41292

Cinderella: Long Cold Winter (Mercury) 14780

Best Of Buffalo Springfield: Retrospective (ATCO) 00844

The Platters: Encore Of Hits (Mercury) 01129

† Rush: Presto (Atlantic) 64202

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Joni Mitchell: Blue (Reprise) 73796

Talking Heads: Naked (Sire/Fly) 53810

Robert Plant: Manic Nirvana (Es Paranza) 54122

Led Zeppelin IV (Runes) (Atlantic) 12014

Cher: Heart Of Stone (Geffen) 42874

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Cowboy Junkies: The Caution Horses (RCA) 54612

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Tina Turner: Foreign Affair (Capitol) 32900

The Cure: Disintegration (Elektra) 01109

The Black Crowes: Shake Your Money Maker (Def American) 52142

Allman Bros. Band: Eat A Peach (Polydor) 63353

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Simon & Garfunkel: The Concert In Central Park (Warner Bros.) 44006

Poco: Legacy (RCA) 54060

Jimi Hendrix: Electric Ladyland (Reprise) 23362

Heart: Brigade (Capitol) 64305

Paula Abdul: Forever Your Girl (Virgin) 00933

Technotronic: Pump Up The Jam-The Album (SBK) 34781

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Bonnie Raitt: Nick Of Time (Capitol) 54410

Fine Young Cannibals: The Raw And The Cooked (I.R.S.) 01068

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Neil Young: Freedom (Reprise) 54012

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young: Greatest Hits (So Far) (Atlantic) 30230

Depeche Mode: Violator (Sire) 73408

Damn Yankees (Warner Bros.) 14852

Billy Ocean: Greatest Hits (Jive) 24510

Poison: Open Up And Say...Ahhh! (Capitol) 73989

Jive's Greatest Rap Singles (Jive) 54281

Hank Williams, Jr.: Lone Wolf (Warner/Curb) 64311

Mike Oldfield: Tubular Bells (Virgin) 70345

Jude Cole: A View From 3rd Street (Reprise) 00562

James Taylor: Greatest Hits (Reprise) 23790

Styx: Classics (14 Greatest Hits) (A&M) 14822

Spyro Gyra: Fast Forward (GRP) 00829

Little Feat: Representing The Mumbo (Warner Bros.) 43785

Randy Travis: No Holdin' Back (Warner Bros.) 34766

ZZ Top: Afterburner (Warner Bros.) 64042

Bon Jovi: Slippery When Wet (Mercury) 43465

Whitney Houston: Whitney (Arista) 52854

Def Leppard: Pyromania (Mercury) 70402

Best Of Bad Company: 10 From 6 (Atlantic) 60321

Enya: Watermark (Geffen) 01041

The Smithereens 11 (Capitol) 10619

Best Of Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels: Rev Up (Rhino) 64188

The Dizzy Gillespie Symphony Sessions (Pro Jazz) 44022

Restless Heart: Fast Movin' Train (RCA) 10802

Smokey Robinson: Love, Smokey (Motown) 63746

Chris Thomas: Cry Of The Prophets (Hightone) 80101

The Moody Blues: Greatest Hits (Threshold) 34284

The Doobie Brothers: Cycles (Capitol) 73187

Fleetwood Mac: Behind The Mask (Warner Bros.) 43766

Janet Jackson's Rhythm Nation (A&M) 72386

Aerosmith: Pump (Geffen) 63678

Skid Row (Atlantic) 01038

Marcus Roberts: Deep In The Shed (Novus) 73646

Best Of Eric Clapton: Time Pieces (Polydor) 23385

Best Of Steve Winwood: Chronicles (Island) 34501

Kronos Quartet, Pat Metheny, Play Steve Reich (Nonesuch) 01013

Stairway To Heaven, Highway To Hell (Mercury) 44573

Pixies: Doolittle (Elektra) 01108

Tommy James & The Shondells: Anthology (Rhino) 44185

Bette Midler: Beaches (Atlantic) 00793

Fleetwood Mac: Greatest Hits (Warner Bros.) 00796

Tracy Chapman: Crossroads (Elektra) 42496

Nitty Gritty Dirt Band: Will The Circle... Vol. 2 (Universal) 93648

After 7 (Virgin) 00945

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Tom Petty: Full Moon Fever (MCA) 33911

Roy Orbison: Black And White Night (Virgin) 64495

The Traveling Wilburys: Vol. One (Wilbury) 00711

George Harrison: Best Of Dark Horse, 1976-89 (Dark Horse) 80307

John Cougar Mellencamp: Big Daddy (Mercury) 80064

R.E.M.: Green (Warner Bros.) 00715

The Police: Every Breath You Take—The Singles (A&M) 73924

Lisa Stansfield: Affection (Arista) 34198

Pretenders: Packed (Sire) 00576

Alannah Myles (Atlantic) 30045

Richard Marx: Repeat Offender (EMI) 01118

Gershwin: S' Wonderful (Pro Arte) 24758

The Best Of Steely Dan: Decade (MCA) 54135

ZZ Top: Afterburner (Warner Bros.) 64042

Bryan Adams: Reckless (A&M) 51540

James Brown: The CD Of JB (Polydor) 43431

Lynyrd Skynyrd's Innrds (MCA) 01150

21 Great Country, Rock, & Love Songs, Vol. 1 (Laurie) 00561

Soul II Soul: Keep On Movin' (Virgin) 14823

Tesla: Great Radio Controversy (Geffen) 00839

Kitaro: Kojiki (Geffen) 43758

M.C. Hammer: Please Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em (Capitol) 34791

Michael McDonald: Take It To Heart (Reprise) 00573

Elton John: Sleeping With The Past (MCA) 10469

Madonna: Like A Prayer (Sire) 01029

Taylor Dayne: Can't Fight Fate (Arista) 01114

The London Quireboys: A Bit Of What You Fancy (Capitol) 14798

Keith Whitley: I Wonder Do You Think Of Me (RCA) 33768

Rickie Lee Jones: Flying Cowboys (Geffen) 94110

Best Of The Doobie Brothers (Warner Bros.) 43738

Gary Burton: Reunion (GRP) 24792

U2: Rattle And Hum (Island) 00596

Lenny Kravitz: Let Love Rule (Virgin) 54439

Lita Ford: Stiletto (RCA) 63893

Quincy Jones: Back On The Block (Qwest) 64116

Bon Jovi: New Jersey (Mercury) 00516

Roxette: Look Sharp! (EMI) 01106

James Galway: Greatest Hits (RCA) 73233

Best Of The Chiffons (Mercury) 64427

Boston: Third Stage (MCA) 73392

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Van Halen 1 (Warner Bros.) 14620

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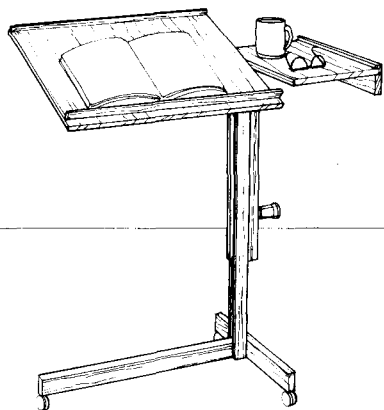
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tropical-fish aqua-parks got that goofy dollar-sign-in-the-eyeballs look. Phone booths were a turbulent business, and I wanted protection.

Not that I didn't make my share of mistakes. I joined the mob flocking to hot locations, paying an insane amount to become the eleventh booth in a line stretching down the side of the McDonald's nearest the high school. Day after day I'd sit in my car in panicky despair, watching no one enter my booth. The price wars started when Ricky Enslin introduced Family Hour: between 6:00 and 7:00 A.M., call any relative, second cousin or closer, anywhere in Berks County, for a nickel. I tried to compete. I still have the sign on the wall of my office (actually, it's just the spare bedroom, where I stack my change) as a reminder of how not to run a business: "ENJOY A COMPLIMENTARY MUG OF VEGETARIAN CHILI WITH EACH LOCAL CALL." Every time someone dialed, I lost about sixty cents. And then I lost my wife, who called from my own booth to say I could forward her chili to Portland: she was leaving me.

The water-main break in the McDonald's parking lot brought in enough insurance money for me to survive that critical first year when most businesses fail. But there's always something. Lately it's slugs. To save a quarter people shove the damndest stuff in there—flattened Sprite bottle tops, model-car hubcaps, thin slices of hot dog wrapped in tin foil.

I MADE IT HOME with plenty of time to shower, shave, and change into my tux, but I slipped on a puddle of uncounted quarters and tore my trousers too badly to repair with a stapler. I grabbed my only other pair of black slacks and ran a strip of electrical tape down each leg, a semblance of a satin stripe. It's this kind of improvisation that makes me a natural entrepreneur.

Driving over to Ginny's, I thought about expansion. I wanted a fourth phone booth, probably "Damn Yankees." And I had my eye on a Swiss two-franc Auto-Groom. Twenty seconds after you wedge your head into the clamps, those high-speed oscillating blades have given you as neat a trim as you'd get from an actual barber.

Ginny looked terrific, of course. She admired my tux, and when she smoothed down the strip of tape that

had begun curling up my right leg, the pounding of my heart fluttered the ruffles on my shirt. As we pulled into the mini-mall, she spotted Matt and Brenda running chamois over Le Canard Diabolique / The Devil's Duck, as the bilingual sign described it. Matt was in the powder-blue tux he wore at his old job, selling popcorn at the Hexaplex.

I handed Ginny a bottle of Cold Duck, my little joke. "I declare this duck open!" she said, and swung the bottle. A crash, a spray of champagne, and then everybody was kissing everybody else, except for me and Matt kissing each other, of course. Then I showed my friends a tiny replica of Le Canard; Toby O'Brien, down at the Hobby Hut, had made it up. I planned to present it to our first customer. We stood around, eager with anticipation.

"Great dress, Brenda," Ginny said a few minutes later. "Is that Spandex?"

"It's like Spandex, but it's not actual Spandex."

"Well, you look great. I'll bet you still have the lowest percentage of body fat of anyone in our class."

Everyone's legs were getting tired, and the girls were wearing heels, so I suggested we sit in the car for a few minutes, "just until someone comes along to ride, ride, ride the wild duck," I sang. Nobody laughed.

Matt walked over to the Quick Pick to get a six-pack and some peanuts. Ginny began scanning the radio up and down the dial in that way that's so irritating when anybody does it but you.

Brenda stuck it out for one beer, and then she had to get back to school. Her wrestling team had a meet, she said. It seemed kind of early in the season to me.

Ginny kept checking her watch. Her interior-design class was doing carpets and wall coverings that evening. Matt offered to drop her on his way home.

Around seven-thirty the streetlights came on, so there wasn't any chance that darkness would conceal my first patron, who'd probably be along any minute, as soon as the next show at the Hexaplex let out.

In Japan people buy sweaters from vending machines. The street-corner auto-nurse draws blood samples. Coin-operated colleges can take you all the way to a B.A. They always give change. They're never vandalized. I wasn't worried. I was riding the future. □



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ACTOR

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SEASON PREVIEW

America's food and harvest festivals

**CASTROVILLE
ARTICHOKE FESTIVAL**
Castroville, Calif.
September 14 • 16

Marilyn Monroe was the first to be crowned Artichoke Queen here, in 1959. These days awards are given not only to the beauty-contest winner but also to the person who eats the most artichokes and the one who prepares the best dish incorporating artichokes. The festival's other aspects include a parade, a firefighters' muster, and carnival games. And from morning to evening on Saturday and Sunday, bluegrass, country, swing, and rock bands will perform on two stages. Admission is \$1 for adults and free for children. For more information: Castroville Artichoke Festival, Box 1041, Castroville, CA 95012; (408) 633-2465.

**DEPOE BAY
SALMON BAKE**
Depoe Bay, Oregon
September 15

Depoe Bay, with a population of 835, will serve 2,500 pounds of fresh local salmon to 3,000 guests at its 35th annual salmon bake, at Fogarty Creek State Park. The salmon is roasted Indian-style—on alder stakes over a 100-foot-long cedarwood fire—and served with all the trimmings, buffet style, by the sea. The charge for all the salmon you can eat is \$9 for adults and \$4 for children. Siletz tribal chief Charlie Depoe will perform Indian dances. What's more, Depoe Bay, the world's smallest natural navigable harbor, is said to be ideal for whale-watching from the shore. For more information: Depoe Bay Chamber of Commerce, Box 21, Depoe Bay, OR 97341; (503) 765-2889.



**VALLEY OF THE MOON
VINTAGE FESTIVAL**
Sonoma, Calif.
September 29 • 30

Sonoma boasts the original California wine festival, now in its 93rd year. The weekend includes a traditional blessing of the grapes, re-enactments of the historical Vallejo-Haraszthy wedding and the 1846 Bear Flag revolt, a grape-stomping contest, and continuous music and entertainment. The highlight, of course, is the wine-tasting: more than 25 local wineries will pour from noon to 5 p.m. both days. Events take place on the town's eight-acre plaza. All events except the wine-tasting are free; \$5 buys a glass and several samples. For more information: Valley of the Moon Vintage Festival, Box 652, Sonoma, CA 95476; (707) 996-2109.

**APPLE BUTTER
FESTIVAL**
Burton, Ohio
October 13 • 14

Century Village, a 19th-century restored community in operation since 1938, ends its season with its biggest annual event.

At 4 a.m. Saturday, workers start cooking apple butter in huge copper kettles over an open fire on the town commons. Later in the morning it's served on slices of homemade Amish bread, with cider and apple fritters. During the festival the houses of the village can be toured and artisans will be selling handmade rugs, quilts, and dolls. The gates are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Admission is \$2.50 for adults and \$1.50 for children. For more information: Century Village, 14653 East Park Street, Burton, OH 44021; (216) 834-4012.

**SENECA NATION
DINNER**
Salamanca, N.Y.
October 20

Since 1961 Salamanca, the only American city located on an Indian reservation, has served an annual all-Indian-foods dinner. More than 20 items are on the menu, including roast venison, roast turkey, corn bread, corn soup, squash, samp (a cereal dish made from hominy), crisp salt pork, "ghost bread," and mashed Indian beans. During four seatings at the Jimmersontown Presbyterian Church, from noon to 6 p.m., some

500 people are served. Tickets cost \$7. The hosts prefer reservations but try not to turn away walk-ins, especially ones who have traveled far to join the feast. For more information or reservations: George Heron, 93 Forest Avenue, Salamanca, NY 14779; (716) 945-1233.

**TERLINGUA INTERNA-
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CHILI COOK-OFF**
Terlingua, Texas
November 3

In 1967 Frank X. Tolbert pitted the Texan writer and "chief chef" Wick Fowler (creator of 2 Alarm Chili) against the Yankee writer H. Alan Smith (who dared claim: "I know more about chili than anyone else") in a tongue-in-cheek chili cook-off in the ghost town of Terlingua. One judge voted for Smith, and one for Fowler—and the third judge passed out. At the 24th Annual Original Terlingua International Frank X. Tolbert-Wick Fowler Memorial Championship Chili Cook-Off about 350 chefs, including nearly 50 state champions, will begin cooking early in the morning; a few hours later they'll start offering free samples to the 4,000 or so passersby. At noon the chili will be ladled into unmarked cups and judged on appearance, aroma, and taste. There's also a showmanship category, a throwback to the old days when getting a judge's attention with humor (or, failing that, a shot of tequila) improved the chef's chances. Gary P. Nunn's country-and-western band will provide entertainment. Terlingua is still a ghost town, so most people arrive with trailers or tents. The entrance fee is \$7. For more information: The Viva Terlingua Headquarters, Box 617, Corsicana, TX 75110; (214) 874-5601.



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The 24-valve, 220 horsepower Ford Taurus SHO.

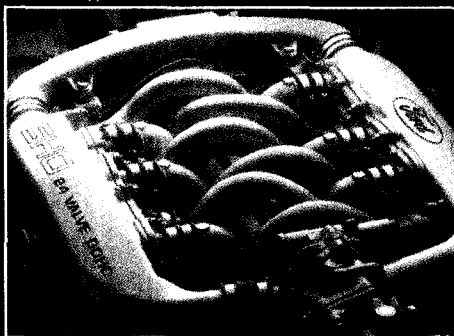
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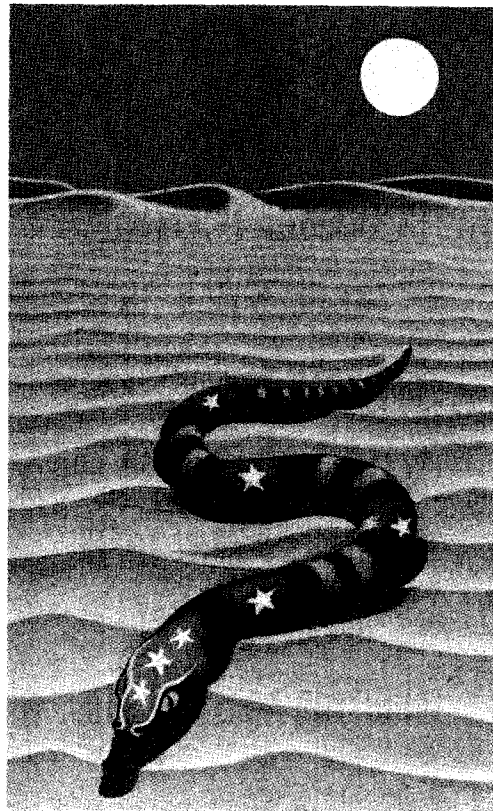
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Why so many Muslims deeply resent the West, and why their bitterness will not easily be mollified

THE ROOTS OF MUSLIM RAGE

BY BERNARD LEWIS



IN ONE OF HIS LETTERS THOMAS JEFFERSON remarked that in matters of religion “the maxim of civil government” should be reversed and we should rather say, “Divided we stand, united, we fall.” In this remark Jefferson was setting forth with classic terseness an idea that has come to be regarded as essentially American: the separation of Church and State. This idea was not entirely new; it had some precedents in the writings of Spinoza, Locke, and the philosophers of the European Enlightenment. It was in the United States, however, that the principle was first given the force of law and gradually, in the course of two centuries, became a reality.

If the idea that religion and politics should be separat-

ed is relatively new, dating back a mere three hundred years, the idea that they are distinct dates back almost to the beginnings of Christianity. Christians are enjoined in their Scriptures to “render . . . unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s and unto God the things which are God’s.” While opinions have differed as to the real meaning of this phrase, it has generally been interpreted as legitimizing a situation in which two institutions exist side by side, each with its own laws and chain of authority—one concerned with religion, called the Church, the other concerned with politics, called the State. And since they are two, they may be joined or separated, subordinate or independent, and conflicts may arise between them over questions of demarcation and jurisdiction.

This formulation of the problems posed by the relations between religion and politics, and the possible solutions to those problems, arise from Christian, not universal, principles and experience. There are other religious traditions in which religion and politics are differently perceived, and in which, therefore, the problems and the possible solutions are radically different from those we know in the West. Most of these traditions, despite their often very high level of sophistication and achievement, remained or became local—limited to one region or one culture or one people. There is one, however, that in its worldwide distribution, its continuing vitality, its universalist aspirations, can be compared to Christianity, and that is Islam.

Islam is one of the world's great religions. Let me be explicit about what I, as a historian of Islam who is not a Muslim, mean by that. Islam has brought comfort and peace of mind to countless millions of men and women. It has given dignity and meaning to drab and impoverished lives. It has taught people of different races to live in brotherhood and people of different creeds to live side by side in reasonable tolerance. It inspired a great civilization in which others besides Muslims lived creative and useful lives and which, by its achievement, enriched the whole world. But Islam, like other religions, has also known periods when it inspired in some of its followers a mood of hatred and violence. It is our misfortune that part, though by no means all or even most, of the Muslim world is now going through such a period, and that much, though again not all, of that hatred is directed against us.

We should not exaggerate the dimensions of the problem. The Muslim world is far from unanimous in its rejection of the West, nor have the Muslim regions of the Third World been the most passionate and the most extreme in their hostility. There are still significant numbers, in some quarters perhaps a majority, of Muslims with whom we share certain basic cultural and moral, social and political, beliefs and aspirations; there is still an imposing Western presence—cultural, economic, diplomatic—in Muslim lands, some of which are Western allies. Certainly nowhere in the Muslim world, in the Middle East or elsewhere, has American policy suffered disasters or encountered problems comparable to those in Southeast Asia or Central America. There is no Cuba, no Vietnam, in the Muslim world, and no place where American forces are involved as combatants or even as

"advisers." But there is a Libya, an Iran, and a Lebanon, and a surge of hatred that distresses, alarms, and above all baffles Americans.

At times this hatred goes beyond hostility to specific interests or actions or policies or even countries and becomes a rejection of Western civilization as such, not only what it does but what it is, and the principles and values that it practices and professes. These are indeed seen as innately evil, and those who promote or accept them as the "enemies of God."

This phrase, which recurs so frequently in the language of the Iranian leadership, in both their judicial proceedings and their political pronouncements, must seem very strange to the modern outsider, whether religious or secular. The idea that God has enemies, and needs human help in order to identify and dispose of them, is a little difficult to assimilate. It is not, however, all that alien.

The concept of the enemies of God is familiar in preclassical and classical antiquity, and in both the Old and New Testaments, as well as in the Koran. A particularly relevant version of the idea occurs in the dualist religions of ancient Iran, whose cosmogony assumed not one but two supreme powers. The Zoroastrian devil, unlike the Christian or Muslim or Jewish devil, is not one of God's creatures performing some of God's more mysterious tasks but an independent power, a supreme force of evil engaged in a cosmic struggle against God. This belief influenced a number of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish sects, through Manichaeism and other routes. The almost forgotten religion of the Manichees has given its name to the perception of problems as a stark and simple conflict between matching forces of pure good and pure evil.

The Koran is of course strictly monotheistic, and recognizes one God, one universal power only. There is a struggle in human hearts between good and evil, between God's commandments and the tempter, but this is seen as a struggle ordained by God, with its outcome preordained by God, serving as a test of mankind, and not, as in some of the old dualist religions, a struggle in which mankind has a crucial part to play in bringing about the victory of good over evil. Despite this monotheism, Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, was at various stages influenced, especially in Iran, by the dualist idea of a cosmic clash of good and evil, light and darkness, order and chaos, truth and falsehood, God and the Adversary, variously known as devil, Iblis, Satan, and by other names.

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The Rise of the House of Unbelief

IN ISLAM THE STRUGGLE OF GOOD AND EVIL VERY soon acquired political and even military dimensions. Muhammad, it will be recalled, was not only a prophet and a teacher, like the founders of other religions; he was also the head of a polity and of a community, a ruler and a soldier. Hence his struggle involved a state and its armed forces. If the fighters in the war for Islam, the holy war "in the path of God," are fighting for God, it follows that their opponents are fighting against God. And since God is in principle the sovereign, the supreme head of the Islamic state—and the Prophet and, after the Prophet, the caliphs are his vicegerents—then God as sovereign commands the army. The army is God's army and the enemy is God's enemy. The duty of God's soldiers is to dispatch God's enemies as quickly as possible to the place where God will chastise them—that is to say, the afterlife.

Clearly related to this is the basic division of mankind as perceived in Islam. Most, probably all, human societies have a way of distinguishing between themselves and others: insider and outsider, in-group and out-group, kinsman or neighbor and foreigner. These definitions not only define the outsider but also, and perhaps more particularly, help to define and illustrate our perception of ourselves.

In the classical Islamic view, to which many Muslims are beginning to return, the world and all mankind are divided into two: the House of Islam, where the Muslim law and faith prevail, and the rest, known as the House of Unbelief or the House of War, which it is the duty of Muslims ultimately to bring to Islam. But the greater part of the world is still outside Islam, and even inside the Islamic lands, according to the view of the Muslim radicals, the faith of Islam has been undermined and the law of Islam has been abrogated. The obligation of holy war therefore begins at home and continues abroad, against the same infidel enemy.

Like every other civilization known to human history, the Muslim world in its heyday saw itself as the center of truth and enlightenment, surrounded by infidel barbarians whom it would in due course enlighten and civilize. But between the different groups of barbarians there was a crucial difference. The barbarians to the east and the south were polytheists and idolaters, offering no serious threat and no competition at all to Islam. In the north and west, in contrast, Muslims from an early date recognized a genuine rival—a competing world religion, a distinctive civilization inspired by that religion, and an empire that, though much smaller than theirs, was no less ambitious in its claims and aspirations. This was the entity known to itself and others as Christendom, a term that was long almost identical with Europe.

The struggle between these rival systems has now lasted for some fourteen centuries. It began with the advent

of Islam, in the seventh century, and has continued virtually to the present day. It has consisted of a long series of attacks and counterattacks, jihads and crusades, conquests and reconquests. For the first thousand years Islam was advancing, Christendom in retreat and under threat. The new faith conquered the old Christian lands of the Levant and North Africa, and invaded Europe, ruling for a while in Sicily, Spain, Portugal, and even parts of France. The attempt by the Crusaders to recover the lost lands of Christendom in the east was held and thrown back, and even the Muslims' loss of southwestern Europe to the Reconquista was amply compensated by the Islamic advance into southeastern Europe, which twice reached as far as Vienna. For the past three hundred years, since the failure of the second Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683 and the rise of the European colonial empires in Asia and Africa, Islam has been on the defensive, and the Christian and post-Christian civilization of Europe and her daughters has brought the whole world, including Islam, within its orbit.

FOR A LONG TIME NOW THERE HAS BEEN A RISING tide of rebellion against this Western paramouncy, and a desire to reassert Muslim values and restore Muslim greatness. The Muslim has suffered successive stages of defeat. The first was his loss of domination in the world, to the advancing power of Russia and the West. The second was the undermining of his authority in his own country, through an invasion of foreign ideas and laws and ways of life and sometimes even foreign rulers or settlers, and the enfranchisement of native non-Muslim elements. The third—the last straw—was the challenge to his mastery in his own house, from emancipated women and rebellious children. It was too much to endure, and the outbreak of rage against these alien, infidel, and incomprehensible forces that had subverted his dominance, disrupted his society, and finally violated the sanctuary of his home was inevitable. It was also natural that this rage should be directed primarily against the millennial enemy and should draw its strength from ancient beliefs and loyalties.

Europe and her daughters? The phrase may seem odd to Americans, whose national myths, since the beginning of their nationhood and even earlier, have usually defined their very identity in opposition to Europe, as something new and radically different from the old European ways. This is not, however, the way that others have seen it; not often in Europe, and hardly ever elsewhere.

Though people of other races and cultures participated, for the most part involuntarily, in the discovery and creation of the Americas, this was, and in the eyes of the rest of the world long remained, a European enterprise, in which Europeans predominated and dominated and to which Europeans gave their languages, their religions, and much of their way of life.

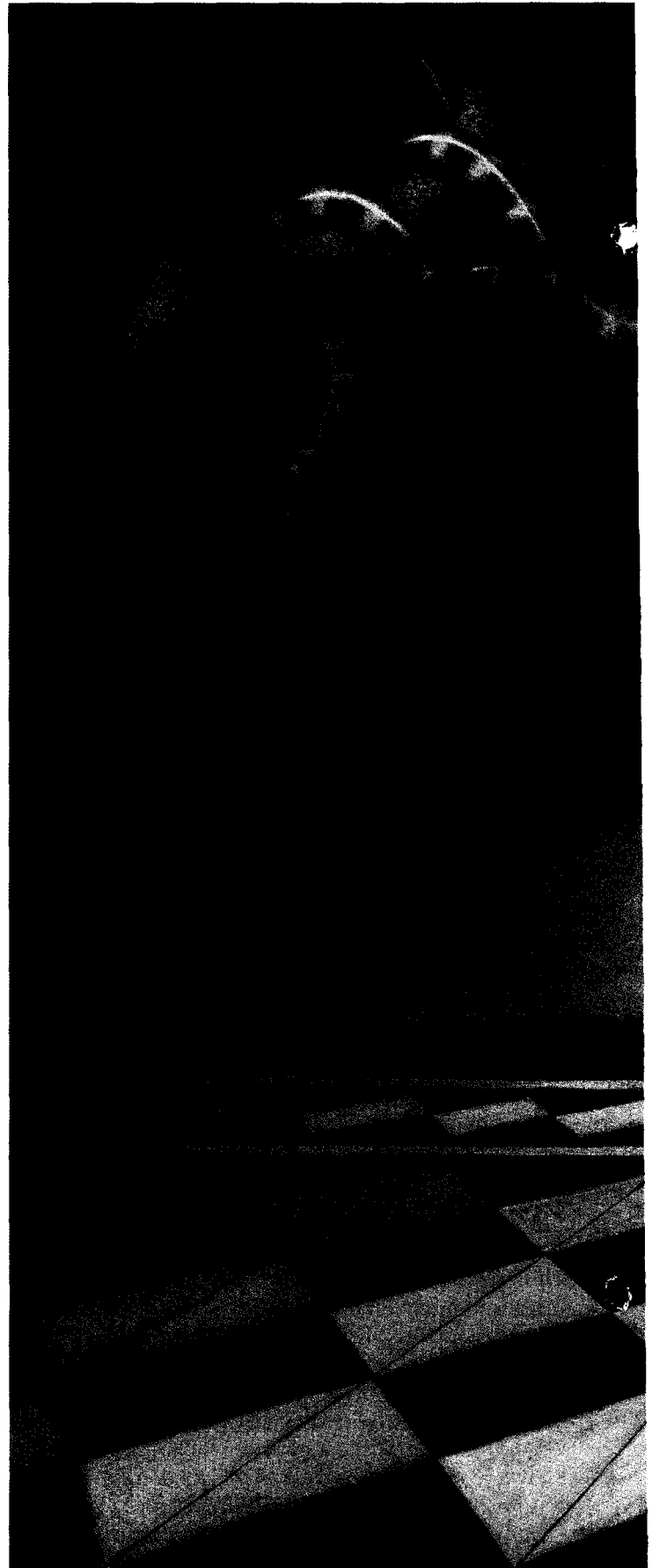
For a very long time voluntary immigration to America

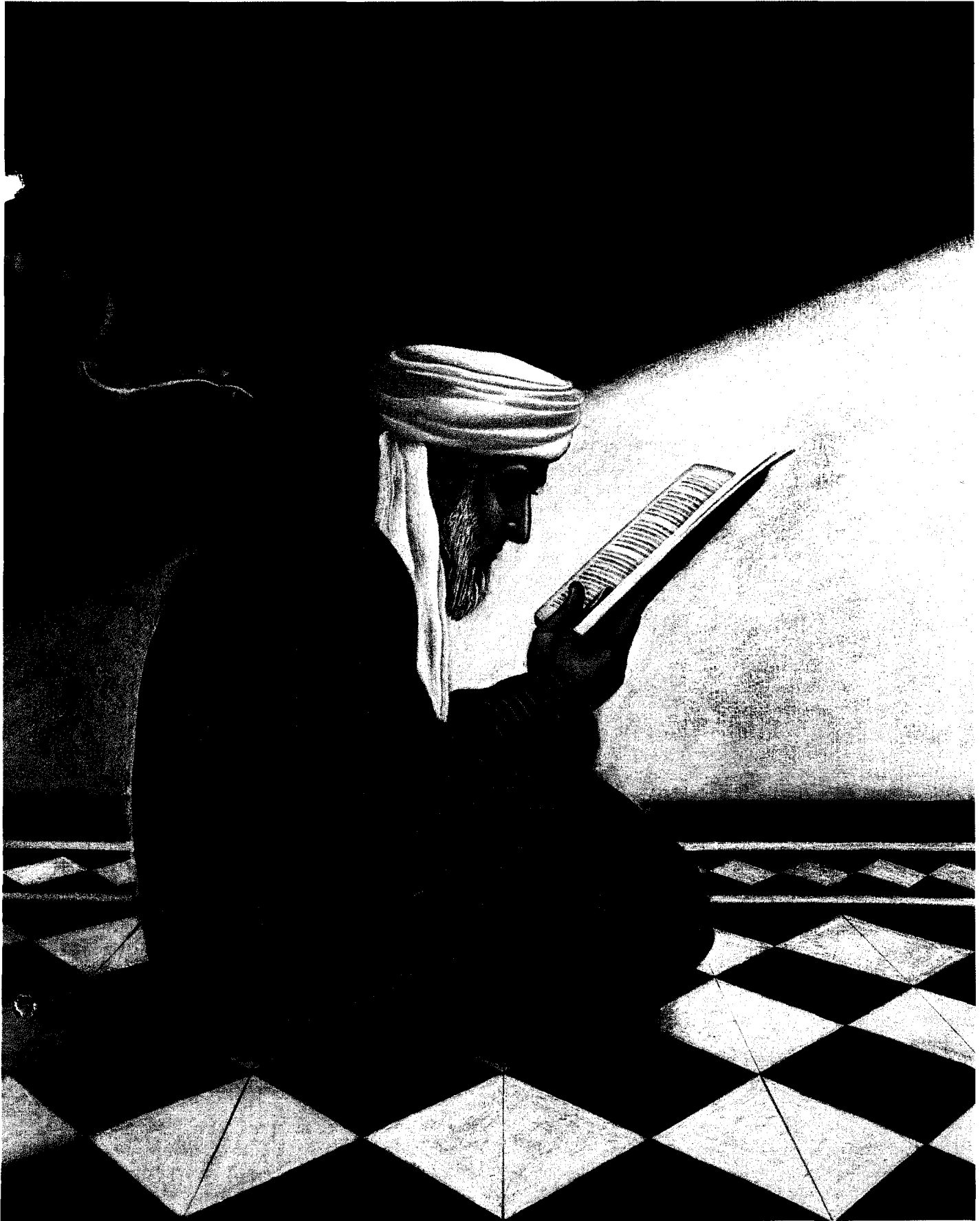
was almost exclusively European. There were indeed some who came from the Muslim lands in the Middle East and North Africa, but few were Muslims; most were members of the Christian and to a lesser extent the Jewish minorities in those countries. Their departure for America, and their subsequent presence in America, must have strengthened rather than lessened the European image of America in Muslim eyes.

In the lands of Islam remarkably little was known about America. At first the voyages of discovery aroused some interest; the only surviving copy of Columbus's own map of America is a Turkish translation and adaptation, still preserved in the Topkapi Palace Museum, in Istanbul. A sixteenth-century Turkish geographer's account of the discovery of the New World, titled *The History of Western India*, was one of the first books printed in Turkey. But thereafter interest seems to have waned, and not much is said about America in Turkish, Arabic, or other Muslim languages until a relatively late date. A Moroccan ambassador who was in Spain at the time wrote what must surely be the first Arabic account of the American Revolution. The Sultan of Morocco signed a treaty of peace and friendship with the United States in 1787, and thereafter the new republic had a number of dealings, some friendly, some hostile, most commercial, with other Muslim states. These seem to have had little impact on either side. The American Revolution and the American republic to which it gave birth long remained unnoticed and unknown. Even the small but growing American presence in Muslim lands in the nineteenth century—merchants, consuls, missionaries, and teachers—aroused little or no curiosity, and is almost unmentioned in the Muslim literature and newspapers of the time.

The Second World War, the oil industry, and postwar developments brought many Americans to the Islamic lands; increasing numbers of Muslims also came to America, first as students, then as teachers or businessmen or other visitors, and eventually as immigrants. Cinema and later television brought the American way of life, or at any rate a certain version of it, before countless millions to whom the very name of America had previously been meaningless or unknown. A wide range of American products, particularly in the immediate postwar years, when European competition was virtually eliminated and Japanese competition had not yet arisen, reached into the remotest markets of the Muslim world, winning new customers and, perhaps more important, creating new tastes and ambitions. For some, America represented freedom and justice and opportunity. For many more, it represented wealth and power and success, at a time when these qualities were not regarded as sins or crimes.

And then came the great change, when the leaders of a widespread and widening religious revival sought out and identified their enemies as the enemies of God, and gave them "a local habitation and a name" in the Western Hemisphere. Suddenly, or so it seemed, America had be-





come the archenemy, the incarnation of evil, the diabolic opponent of all that is good, and specifically, for Muslims, of Islam. Why?

Some Familiar Accusations

AMONG THE COMPONENTS IN THE MOOD OF ANTI-Westernism, and more especially of anti-Americanism, were certain intellectual influences coming from Europe. One of these was from Germany, where a negative view of America formed part of a school of thought by no means limited to the Nazis but including writers as diverse as Rainer Maria Rilke, Ernst Jünger, and Martin Heidegger. In this perception, America was the ultimate example of civilization without culture: rich and comfortable, materially advanced but soulless and artificial; assembled or at best constructed, not grown; mechanical, not organic; technologically complex but lacking the spirituality and vitality of the rooted, human, national cultures of the Germans and other "authentic" peoples. German philosophy, and particularly the philosophy of education, enjoyed a considerable vogue among Arab and some other Muslim intellectuals in the thirties and early forties, and this philosophic anti-Americanism was part of the message.

After the collapse of the Third Reich and the temporary ending of German influence, another philosophy, even more anti-American, took its place—the Soviet version of Marxism, with a denunciation of Western capitalism and of America as its most advanced and dangerous embodiment. And when Soviet influence began to fade, there was yet another to take its place, or at least to supplement its working—the new mystique of Third Worldism, emanating from Western Europe, particularly France, and later also from the United States, and drawing at times on both these earlier philosophies. This mystique was helped by the universal human tendency to invent a golden age in the past, and the specifically European propensity to locate it elsewhere. A new variant of the old golden-age myth placed it in the Third World, where the innocence of the non-Western Adam and Eve was ruined by the Western serpent. This view took as axiomatic the goodness and purity of the East and the wickedness of the West, expanding in an exponential curve of evil from Western Europe to the United States. These ideas, too, fell on fertile ground, and won widespread support.

But though these imported philosophies helped to provide intellectual expression for anti-Westernism and anti-Americanism, they did not cause it, and certainly they do not explain the widespread anti-Westernism that made so many in the Middle East and elsewhere in the Islamic world receptive to such ideas.

It must surely be clear that what won support for such totally diverse doctrines was not Nazi race theory, which can have had little appeal for Arabs, or Soviet atheistic

communism, which can have had little appeal for Muslims, but rather their common anti-Westernism. Nazism and communism were the main forces opposed to the West, both as a way of life and as a power in the world, and as such they could count on at least the sympathy if not the support of those who saw in the West their principal enemy.

But why the hostility in the first place? If we turn from the general to the specific, there is no lack of individual policies and actions, pursued and taken by individual Western governments, that have aroused the passionate anger of Middle Eastern and other Islamic peoples. Yet all too often, when these policies are abandoned and the problems resolved, there is only a local and temporary alleviation. The French have left Algeria, the British have left Egypt, the Western oil companies have left their oil wells, the westernizing Shah has left Iran—yet the generalized resentment of the fundamentalists and other extremists against the West and its friends remains and grows and is not appeased.

The cause most frequently adduced for anti-American feeling among Muslims today is American support for Israel. This support is certainly a factor of importance, increasing with nearness and involvement. But here again there are some oddities, difficult to explain in terms of a single, simple cause. In the early days of the foundation of Israel, while the United States maintained a certain distance, the Soviet Union granted immediate *de jure* recognition and support, and arms sent from a Soviet satellite, Czechoslovakia, saved the infant state of Israel from defeat and death in its first weeks of life. Yet there seems to have been no great ill will toward the Soviets for these policies, and no corresponding good will toward the United States. In 1956 it was the United States that intervened, forcefully and decisively, to secure the withdrawal of Israeli, British, and French forces from Egypt—yet in the late fifties and sixties it was to the Soviets, not America, that the rulers of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and other states turned for arms; it was with the Soviet bloc that they formed bonds of solidarity at the United Nations and in the world generally. More recently, the rulers of the Islamic Republic of Iran have offered the most principled and uncompromising denunciation of Israel and Zionism. Yet even these leaders, before as well as after the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, when they decided for reasons of their own to enter into a dialogue of sorts, found it easier to talk to Jerusalem than to Washington. At the same time, Western hostages in Lebanon, many of them devoted to Arab causes and some of them converts to Islam, are seen and treated by their captors as limbs of the Great Satan.

Another explanation, more often heard from Muslim dissidents, attributes anti-American feeling to American support for hated regimes, seen as reactionary by radicals, as impious by conservatives, as corrupt and tyrannical by both. This accusation has some plausibility, and

could help to explain why an essentially inner-directed, often anti-nationalist movement should turn against a foreign power. But it does not suffice, especially since support for such regimes has been limited both in extent and—as the Shah discovered—in effectiveness.

Clearly, something deeper is involved than these specific grievances, numerous and important as they may be—something deeper that turns every disagreement into a problem and makes every problem insoluble.

THIS REVULSION AGAINST AMERICA, MORE GENERALLY against the West, is by no means limited to the Muslim world; nor have Muslims, with the exception of the Iranian mullahs and their disciples elsewhere, experienced and exhibited the more virulent forms of this feeling. The mood of disillusionment and hostility has affected many other parts of the world, and has even reached some elements in the United States. It is from these last, speaking for themselves and claiming to speak for the oppressed peoples of the Third World, that the most widely publicized explanations—and justifications—of this rejection of Western civilization and its values have of late been heard.

The accusations are familiar. We of the West are accused of sexism, racism, and imperialism, institutionalized in patriarchy and slavery, tyranny and exploitation. To these charges, and to others as heinous, we have no option but to plead guilty—not as Americans, nor yet as Westerners, but simply as human beings, as members of the human race. In none of these sins are we the only sinners, and in some of them we are very far from being the worst. The treatment of women in the Western world, and more generally in Christendom, has always been unequal and often oppressive, but even at its worst it was rather better than the rule of polygamy and concubinage that has otherwise been the almost universal lot of womankind on this planet.

Is racism, then, the main grievance? Certainly the word figures prominently in publicity addressed to Western, Eastern European, and some Third World audiences. It figures less prominently in what is written and published for home consumption, and has become a generalized and meaningless term of abuse—rather like “fascism,” which is nowadays imputed to opponents even by spokesmen for one-party, nationalist dictatorships of various complexions and shirt colors.

Slavery is today universally denounced as an offense

against humanity, but within living memory it has been practiced and even defended as a necessary institution, established and regulated by divine law. The peculiarity of the peculiar institution, as Americans once called it, lay not in its existence but in its abolition. Westerners were the first to break the consensus of acceptance and to outlaw slavery, first at home, then in the other territories they controlled, and finally wherever in the world they were able to exercise power or influence—in a word, by means of imperialism.

Is imperialism, then, the grievance? Some Western powers, and in a sense Western civilization as a whole, have certainly been guilty of imperialism, but are we really to believe that in the expansion of Western Europe there was a quality of moral delinquency lacking in such

earlier, relatively innocent expansions as those of the Arabs or the Mongols or the Ottomans, or in more recent expansions such as that which brought the rulers of Muscovy to the Baltic, the Black Sea, the Caspian, the Hindu Kush, and the Pacific Ocean? In having practiced sexism, racism, and imperialism, the West was merely following the common practice of mankind through the millennia of recorded history. Where it is distinct from all other civilizations is in having recognized, named, and tried, not entirely without success, to remedy these historic diseases. And that is surely a matter for congratulation, not condemnation. We do not hold Western medical science in general, or Dr. Parkinson and Dr. Alzheimer in particular, responsible for the diseases they diagnosed and to which they gave their names.

Of all these offenses the one that is most widely, frequently, and vehemently denounced is undoubtedly imperialism—sometimes just Western, sometimes Eastern (that is, Soviet) and Western alike. But the way this term is used in the literature of Islamic fundamentalists often suggests that it may not carry quite the same meaning for them as for its Western critics. In many of these writings the term “imperialist” is given a distinctly religious significance, being used in association, and sometimes interchangeably, with “missionary,” and denoting a form of attack that includes the Crusades as well as the modern colonial empires. One also sometimes gets the impression that the offense of imperialism is not—as for Western critics—the domination by one people over another but rather the allocation of roles in this relationship. What is truly evil and unacceptable is the domination of infidels over true believers. For true believers to rule

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misbelievers is proper and natural, since this provides for the maintenance of the holy law, and gives the misbelievers both the opportunity and the incentive to embrace the true faith. But for misbelievers to rule over true believers is blasphemous and unnatural, since it leads to the corruption of religion and morality in society, and to the flouting or even the abrogation of God's law. This may help us to understand the current troubles in such diverse places as Ethiopian Eritrea, Indian Kashmir, Chinese Sinkiang, and Yugoslav Kosovo, in all of which Muslim populations are ruled by non-Muslim governments. It may also explain why spokesmen for the new Muslim minorities in Western Europe demand for Islam a degree of legal protection which those countries no longer give to Christianity and have never given to Judaism. Nor, of course, did the governments of the countries of origin of these Muslim spokesmen ever accord such protection to religions other than their own. In their perception, there is no contradiction in these attitudes. The true faith, based on God's final revelation, must be

protected from insult and abuse; other faiths, being either false or incomplete, have no right to any such protection.

THERE ARE OTHER DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF accepting imperialism as an explanation of Muslim hostility, even if we define imperialism narrowly and specifically, as the invasion and domination of Muslim countries by non-Muslims. If the hostility is directed against imperialism in that sense, why has it been so much stronger against Western Europe, which has relinquished all its Muslim possessions and dependencies, than against Russia, which still rules, with no light hand, over many millions of reluctant Muslim subjects and over ancient Muslim cities and countries? And why should it include the United States, which, apart from a brief interlude in the Muslim-minority area of the Philippines, has never ruled any Muslim population? The last surviving European empire with Muslim subjects, that of the Soviet Union, far from being the target of criticism and

AMONG CHILDREN

I walk among the rows of bowed heads—
the children are sleeping through fourth grade
so as to be ready for what is ahead,
the monumental boredom of junior high
and the rush forward tearing their wings
loose and turning their eyes forever inward.
These are the children of Flint, their fathers
work at the spark plug factory or truck
bottled water in five-gallon sea-blue jugs
to the widows of the suburbs. You can see
already how their backs have thickened,
how their small hands, soiled by pig iron,
leap and stutter even in dreams. I would like
to sit down among them and read slowly
from the Book of Job until the windows
pale and the teacher rises out of a milky sea
of industrial scum, her gowns streaming
with light, her foolish words transformed
into song, I would like to arm each one
with a quiver of arrows so that they might
rush like wind there where no battle rages
shouting among the trumpets, Ha! Ha!
How dear the gift of laughter in the face
of the eight-hour day, the cold winter mornings
without coffee and oranges, the long lines

of mothers in old coats waiting silently
where the gates have closed. Ten years ago
I went among these same children, just born,
in the bright ward of the Sacred Heart and leaned
down to hear their breaths delivered that day,
burning with joy. There was such wonder
in their sleep, such purpose in their eyes
closed against autumn, in their damp heads
blurred with the hair of ponds, and not one
turned against me or the light, not one
said, I am sick, I am tired, I will go home,
not one complained or drifted alone,
unloved, on the hardest day of their lives.
Eleven years from now they will become
the men and women of Flint or Paradise,
the majors of a minor town, and I
will be gone into smoke or memory,
so I bow to them here and whisper
all I know, all I will never know.

—Philip Levine

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Evidently, once you've looked beyond the obvious, it is difficult to see anything less.

attack, has been almost exempt. Even the most recent repressions of Muslim revolts in the southern and central Asian republics of the USSR incurred no more than relatively mild words of expostulation, coupled with a disclaimer of any desire to interfere in what are quaintly called the "internal affairs" of the USSR and a request for the preservation of order and tranquillity on the frontier.

One reason for this somewhat surprising restraint is to be found in the nature of events in Soviet Azerbaijan. Islam is obviously an important and potentially a growing element in the Azerbaijani sense of identity, but it is not at present a dominant element, and the Azerbaijani movement has more in common with the liberal patriotism of Europe than with Islamic fundamentalism. Such a movement would not arouse the sympathy of the rulers of the Islamic Republic. It might even alarm them, since a genuinely democratic national state run by the people of Soviet Azerbaijan would exercise a powerful attraction on their kinsmen immediately to the south, in Iranian Azerbaijan.

Another reason for this relative lack of concern for the 50 million or more Muslims under Soviet rule may be a calculation of risk and advantage. The Soviet Union is near, along the northern frontiers of Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan; America and even Western Europe are far away. More to the point, it has not hitherto been the practice of the Soviets to quell disturbances with water cannon and rubber bullets, with TV cameras in attendance, or to release arrested persons on bail and allow them access to domestic and foreign media. The Soviets do not interview their harshest critics on prime time, or tempt them with teaching, lecturing, and writing engagements. On the contrary, their ways of indicating displeasure with criticism can often be quite disagreeable.

But fear of reprisals, though no doubt important, is not the only or perhaps even the principal reason for the relatively minor place assigned to the Soviet Union, as compared with the West, in the demonology of fundamentalism. After all, the great social and intellectual and economic changes that have transformed most of the Islamic world, and given rise to such commonly denounced Western evils as consumerism and secularism, emerged from the West, not from the Soviet Union. No one could accuse the Soviets of consumerism; their materialism is philosophic—to be precise, dialectical—and has little or nothing to do in practice with providing the good things of life. Such provision represents another kind of materialism, often designated by its opponents as crass. It is associated with the capitalist West and not with the communist East, which has practiced, or at least imposed on its subjects, a degree of austerity that would impress a Sufi saint.

Nor were the Soviets, until very recently, vulnerable to charges of secularism, the other great fundamentalist accusation against the West. Though atheist, they were not godless, and had in fact created an elaborate state ap-

paratus to impose the worship of their gods—an apparatus with its own orthodoxy, a hierarchy to define and enforce it, and an armed inquisition to detect and extirpate heresy. The separation of religion from the state does not mean the establishment of irreligion by the state, still less the forcible imposition of an anti-religious philosophy. Soviet secularism, like Soviet consumerism, holds no temptation for the Muslim masses, and is losing what appeal it had for Muslim intellectuals. More than ever before it is Western capitalism and democracy that provide an authentic and attractive alternative to traditional ways of thought and life. Fundamentalist leaders are not mistaken in seeing in Western civilization the greatest challenge to the way of life that they wish to retain or restore for their people.

A Clash of Civilizations

THE ORIGINS OF SECULARISM IN THE WEST MAY be found in two circumstances—in early Christian teachings and, still more, experience, which created two institutions, Church and State; and in later Christian conflicts, which drove the two apart. Muslims, too, had their religious disagreements, but there was nothing remotely approaching the ferocity of the Christian struggles between Protestants and Catholics, which devastated Christian Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and finally drove Christians in desperation to evolve a doctrine of the separation of religion from the state. Only by depriving religious institutions of coercive power, it seemed, could Christendom restrain the murderous intolerance and persecution that Christians had visited on followers of other religions and, most of all, on those who professed other forms of their own.

Muslims experienced no such need and evolved no such doctrine. There was no need for secularism in Islam, and even its pluralism was very different from that of the pagan Roman Empire, so vividly described by Edward Gibbon when he remarked that "the various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful." Islam was never prepared, either in theory or in practice, to accord full equality to those who held other beliefs and practiced other forms of worship. It did, however, accord to the holders of partial truth a degree of practical as well as theoretical tolerance rarely paralleled in the Christian world until the West adopted a measure of secularism in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

At first the Muslim response to Western civilization was one of admiration and emulation—an immense respect for the achievements of the West, and a desire to imitate and adopt them. This desire arose from a keen and growing awareness of the weakness, poverty, and

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backwardness of the Islamic world as compared with the advancing West. The disparity first became apparent on the battlefield but soon spread to other areas of human activity. Muslim writers observed and described the wealth and power of the West, its science and technology, its manufactures, and its forms of government. For a time the secret of Western success was seen to lie in two achievements: economic advancement and especially industry; political institutions and especially freedom. Several generations of reformers and modernizers tried to adapt these and introduce them to their own countries, in the hope that they would thereby be able to achieve equality with the West and perhaps restore their lost superiority.

In our own time this mood of admiration and emulation has, among many Muslims, given way to one of hostility and rejection. In part this mood is surely due to a feeling of humiliation—a growing awareness, among the heirs of an old, proud, and long dominant civilization, of having been overtaken, overborne, and overwhelmed by those whom they regarded as their inferiors. In part this mood is due to events in the Western world itself. One factor of major importance was certainly the impact of two great suicidal wars, in which Western civilization tore itself apart, bringing untold destruction to its own and other peoples, and in which the belligerents conducted an immense propaganda effort, in the Islamic world and elsewhere, to discredit and undermine each other. The message they brought found many listeners, who were all the more ready to respond in that their own experience of Western ways was not happy. The introduction of Western commercial, financial, and industrial methods did indeed bring great wealth, but it accrued to transplanted Westerners and members of Westernized minorities, and to only a few among the mainstream Muslim population. In time these few became more numerous, but they remained isolated from the masses, differing from them even in their dress and style of life. Inevitably they were seen as agents of and collaborators with what was once again regarded as a hostile world. Even the political institutions that had come from the West were discredited, being judged not by their Western originals but by their local imitations, installed by enthusiastic Muslim reformers. These, operating in a situation beyond their control, using imported and inappropriate methods that they did not fully understand, were unable to cope with the rapidly developing

crises and were one by one overthrown. For vast numbers of Middle Easterners, Western-style economic methods brought poverty, Western-style political institutions brought tyranny, even Western-style warfare brought defeat. It is hardly surprising that so many were willing to listen to voices telling them that the old Islamic ways were best and that their only salvation was to throw aside the pagan innovations of the reformers and return to the True Path that God had prescribed for his people.

ULTIMATELY, THE STRUGGLE OF THE FUNDAMENTALISTS is against two enemies, secularism and modernism. The war against secularism is conscious and explicit, and there is by now a whole literature denouncing secularism as an evil neo-pagan force in the

modern world and attributing it variously to the Jews, the West, and the United States. The war against modernity is for the most part neither conscious nor explicit, and is directed against the whole process of change that has taken place in the Islamic world in the past century or more and has transformed the political, economic, social, and even cultural structures of Muslim countries. Islamic fundamentalism has given an aim and a form to the otherwise aimless and formless resentment and anger of the Muslim masses at the forces that have devalued their traditional values and loyalties and, in the final analysis, robbed them of their beliefs, their aspirations, their dignity, and to an increasing extent even their livelihood.

There is something in the religious culture of Islam which inspired, in even the humblest peasant or peddler, a dignity and a courtesy

toward others never exceeded and rarely equalled in other civilizations. And yet, in moments of upheaval and disruption, when the deeper passions are stirred, this dignity and courtesy toward others can give way to an explosive mixture of rage and hatred which impels even the government of an ancient and civilized country—even the spokesman of a great spiritual and ethical religion—to espouse kidnapping and assassination, and try to find, in the life of their Prophet, approval and indeed precedent for such actions.

The instinct of the masses is not false in locating the ultimate source of these cataclysmic changes in the West and in attributing the disruption of their old way of life to the impact of Western domination, Western influence, or Western precept and example. And since the United States is the legitimate heir of European civilization and

**FUNDAMENTALIST
LEADERS ARE NOT MISTAKEN IN SEEING
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the recognized and unchallenged leader of the West, the United States has inherited the resulting grievances and become the focus for the pent-up hate and anger. Two examples may suffice. In November of 1979 an angry mob attacked and burned the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. The stated cause of the crowd's anger was the seizure of the Great Mosque in Mecca by a group of Muslim dissidents—an event in which there was no American involvement whatsoever. Almost ten years later, in February of 1989, again in Islamabad, the USIS center was attacked by angry crowds, this time to protest the publication of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*. Rushdie is a British citizen of Indian birth, and his book had been published five months previously in England. But what provoked the mob's anger, and also the Ayatollah Khomeini's subsequent pronouncement of a death sentence on the author, was the publication of the book in the United States.

It should by now be clear that we are facing a mood and a movement far transcending the level of issues and policies and the governments that pursue them. This is no less than a clash of civilizations—the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both. It is crucially important that we on our side should not be provoked into an equally historic but also equally irrational reaction against that rival.

Not all the ideas imported from the West by Western intruders or native Westernizers have been rejected. Some have been accepted by even the most radical Islamic fundamentalists, usually without acknowledgment of source, and suffering a sea change into something rarely rich but often strange. One such was political freedom, with the associated notions and practices of representation, election, and constitutional government. Even the Islamic Republic of Iran has a written constitution and an elected assembly, as well as a kind of episcopate, for none of which is there any prescription in Islamic teaching or any precedent in the Islamic past. All these institutions are clearly adapted from Western models. Muslim states have also retained many of the cultural and social customs of the West and the symbols that express them, such as the form and style of male (and to a much lesser extent female) clothing, notably in the military. The use of Western-invented guns and tanks and planes is a military necessity, but the continued use of fitted tunics and peaked caps is a cultural choice. From constitutions to Coca-Cola, from tanks and television to T-shirts, the symbols and artifacts, and through them the ideas, of the West have retained—even strengthened—their appeal.

THE MOVEMENT NOWADAYS CALLED FUNDAMENTALISM is not the only Islamic tradition. There are others, more tolerant, more open, that helped to inspire the great achievements of Islamic civilization in the past, and we may hope that these other traditions will in time prevail. But before this issue is decided there will be a hard struggle, in which we of the West can do little or nothing. Even the attempt might do harm, for these are issues that Muslims must decide among themselves. And in the meantime we must take great care on all sides to avoid the danger of a new era of religious wars, arising from the exacerbation of differences and the revival of ancient prejudices.

To this end we must strive to achieve a better appreciation of other religious and political cultures, through the study of their history, their literature, and their achievements. At the same time, we may hope that they will try to achieve a better understanding of ours, and especially that they will understand and respect, even if they do not choose to adopt for themselves, our Western perception of the proper relationship between religion and politics.

To describe this perception I shall end as I began, with a quotation from an American President, this time not the justly celebrated Thomas Jefferson but the somewhat unjustly neglected John Tyler, who, in a letter dated July 10, 1843, gave eloquent and indeed prophetic expression to the principle of religious freedom:

The United States have adventured upon a great and noble experiment, which is believed to have been hazarded in the absence of all previous precedent—that of total separation of Church and State. No religious establishment *by law* exists among us. The conscience is left free from all restraint and each is permitted to worship his Maker after his own judgement. The offices of the Government are open alike to all. No tithes are levied to support an established Hierarchy, nor is the fallible judgement of man set up as the sure and infallible creed of faith. The Mahomedan, if he will to come among us would have the privilege guaranteed to him by the constitution to worship according to the Koran; and the East Indian might erect a shrine to Brahma if it so pleased him. Such is the spirit of toleration inculcated by our political Institutions. . . . The Hebrew persecuted and down trodden in other regions takes up his abode among us with none to make him afraid. . . . and the Aegis of the Government is over him to defend and protect him. Such is the great experiment which we have tried, and such are the happy fruits which have resulted from it; our system of free government would be imperfect without it.

The body may be oppressed and manacled and yet survive; but if the mind of man be fettered, its energies and faculties perish, and what remains is of the earth, earthly. Mind should be free as the light or as the air. □



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

MAYA ANGELOU AND BILLIE HOLIDAY

AFTER MAYA ANGELOU returned from her European tour as premier dancer in *Porgy and Bess*, she let her hair grow "natural," took a job as a nightclub singer, and moved with her son into a bungalow in Hollywood's swank Laurel Canyon. It was June, 1958. One morning her voice coach, "Wilkie" Wilkerson, dropped by. Billie Holiday was in town; he would bring her over if Maya thought she could handle it. "What's to handle?" Angelou asked. "She's a woman. I'm a woman."

But her nonchalance quickly gave way to nerves. Billie Holiday was more than a woman; she was Lady Day, she was legend. She had teamed up with the greats—Lester Young, Benny Goodman, Count Basie—and broken ground as a black woman singer with an all-white band. Then there was the flip side—the dark past, the time served, the long addictions to drugs and alcohol, all too apparent in the ravaged figure now walking in the door.

At first Angelou found her guest hostile, her conversation a melee of sarcasm and obscenities. But after

lunch—fried chicken, rice, Arkansas gravy—Holiday softened. Maya was a nice lady, and a good cook, too, she said. When Wilkerson got up to leave, she opted to stay. Angelou felt herself being watched. "You a square, ain't you?" Holiday said. Angelou admitted that she was.

Guy, age twelve, came home from school. He was introduced, and proved charming. Holiday forgot that she couldn't stand children ("little crumb-crushers") and followed him out to water the lawn. She told him about all the low-down men she had known in her life, but she was careful to curb her profanity. After dinner she sang him a goodnight song—"You're My Thrill."

Holiday spent five days with Angelou, and not until the end did she revert to her angry self. She was abusive to Guy; she accompanied Maya to the nightclub and shouted her off the stage. Lady Day was one complicated woman. At parting she left Angelou with a two-edged prophecy: "You're going to be famous," she said. "But it won't be for singing."

—Nancy Caldwell Sorel

A Short Story



Luck

by Richard Bausch

I CAME BACK IN NO TIME WITH THE BURGERS, AND when he reached into the bag I smelled it on him. I didn't say anything. He got his burger and opened it, talking goofy like he does. "Best car ever made was the Chevrolet, Ray."

"Right, Dwight," I said, but my heart wasn't in it.

He sat on the stairs, and I sat in the window seat of this place. We'd done the walls and the first coat of trim. We had a lot of touch-up to do, and if he was going to start drinking, the work wasn't going to get done. Outside, we still had the porch railing. It was a big, wraparound porch. Two days' work at least, with both of us pushing it.

"Dad," I said.

He was chewing, shaking his head. He liked the hamburger. All his life, I think, he enjoyed things more than other people. "Man," he said.

It was getting dark. We still had to finish the trim in the dining room—the chair rail. "Well," I said. I was watching his eyes.

"You know," he said, "I do good work. Don't I do good work?"

"The finest," I said.

He smiled. "And you help me."

I concentrated on my food. I could've maybe figured I'd made a mistake until now. But this was the way he talked whenever he was on the stuff. I started looking around casually for where he could hide it.

"You're a good son," he said. I might've nodded. I was eating that

hamburger and trying not to show him anything.

"Twenty years ago I painted my first house," he said. "Helped a friend one summer. I've told you this. Never dreamed I'd have a son to help me. You ought to be in college, son. But I'm just as glad you're here."

I thought he might start crying.

"Best get back to work," I said.

He was sitting there, thinking. I knew what he was seeing in his mind. "Your mother sure can pick them," he said. "I don't know what she saw in me."

I stood. I had what was left of my burger in my hand. I put it in the bag and went over to the paint can.

"Hey," he said.

I said, "Hey."

"I said I don't know what she saw in me."

"Me either," I said.

"Good thing you look like her," he said.

"Right, Dwight," I said.

"That's the truth, Ruth," he said. He was still sitting there.

"You want me to do the second coat in here?" I said.

"Naw. Get the dining room."

I said, "Okay."

"Hey," he said. "What if I take you and your mother out to dinner tonight?"

"That'd be all right," I told him.

"Okay," he said. "You're on."

"Great," I said. It was getting dark. We'd been eating burgers.

"You think she'll feel like going out?" he said.

"Got me," I said.

"She's been staying in the house too much. Working too hard. She doesn't need to put so much time in every day. Right?"

I said, "Sure."

"Yeah," he said. "And you've been working hard."

"Yes, sir," I said.

*I let him go, though I
knew what he was up to. I didn't have the
heart not to trust him once more.*

"You think we did a good job here, so far?" He stood up and looked around at everything.

I did the same. I saw that over the kitchen cabinets, where he'd

been painting when I left to get the burgers, someone was going to have to do a lot of touching up. He'd missed some places. He'd been hurrying it. You couldn't mistake a thing like that. Back before he was too bad, when I was small, he used to take me through the houses when he was finished with them, and he would point out where other painters cut corners and he didn't. He'd show me where he'd taken the extra step and done it right. He was teaching me. Do a thing, boy, you do it right the first time. You take pride in what you do. He drummed it into me. You go that extra mile. You take pains. People remember good work. People remember excellence. And

when I worked with him summers and he was okay, he'd do a thing, put the last touch on something, and he'd stand back and look at it, proud as hell. "New money," he'd say.

And I'd say, "New money."

You could hear the satisfaction in the way he breathed, looking at what he'd done.

That was when he was okay.

"Little touch-up over the sink," he said to me now.

I didn't answer.

"Well, I better get off to the bank before they close the drive-in window."

"The bank," I said.

He didn't look at me.

"The bank, Frank."

I just stared at him. For a long time we were like that, you know. Staring at each other from opposite sides of the room, with the tarpaulin and the paint cans between us, like we were listening for some sound.

"How'm I going to take you guys out to eat without some money, honey?" he said.

"Oh," I said. "Right."

"You go ahead and finish what you can in the dining room."

I nodded.

"We straight?"

"Straight," I said.

It was what we had always said when he'd had to discipline me and he'd come in afterward and explained the punishment. We'd been saying it as a joke between us since I was sixteen.

"Sure?" he said.

"Very, Jerry," I said.

He put his hand out with the thumbs-up sign. "I'll be back, Jack."

"Okay," I said.

I watched him get out of his coveralls, because I thought it might fall out of one of the pockets. He laid the coveralls across the kitchen counter, smoothed his hair back with both hands, and looked at me. "Don't bust yourself," he said. "We did enough for one day."

"Right," I said.

I knew what would happen now. He went into the bathroom and flushed the toilet. When he came out, he went

to the door and got himself through it quick, calling back to me that he'd be five minutes. I stood by the front window and watched him get into the truck. He wouldn't be back tonight. He wouldn't be back for days, maybe. A week. Then we'd get the call. We'd go get him. He'd be in the hospital again, going through the treatment. This is all stuff you know. You don't need me to paint the picture.

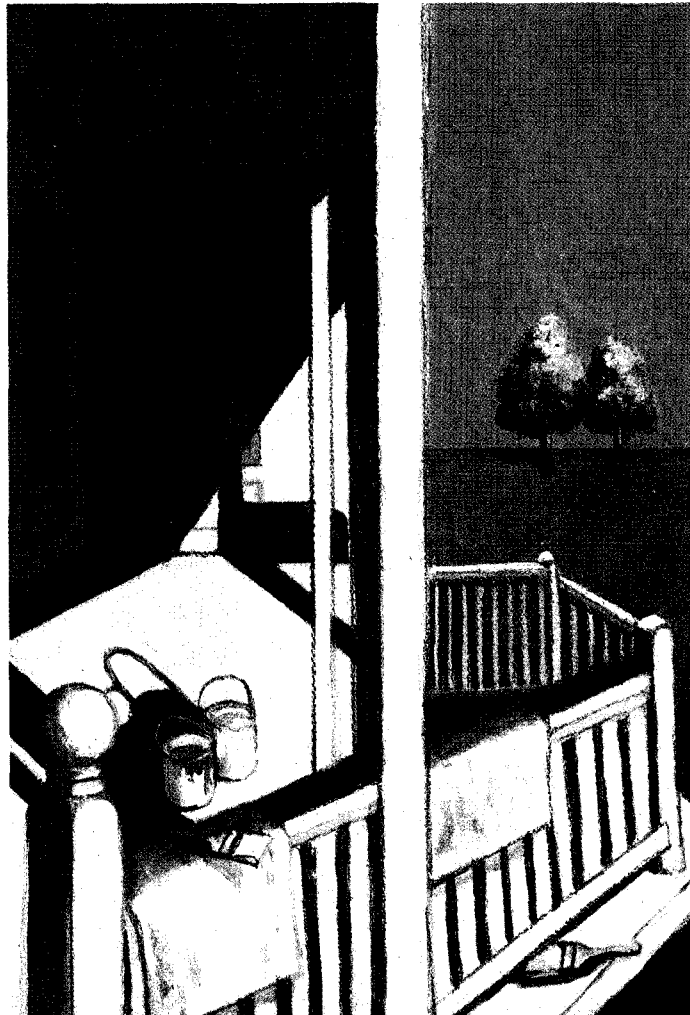
I went back into the dining room. We still had a lot of work to do. These people were supposed to occupy in two days, and now the painting wasn't going to get finished. No way. But I started on it just the same. I was

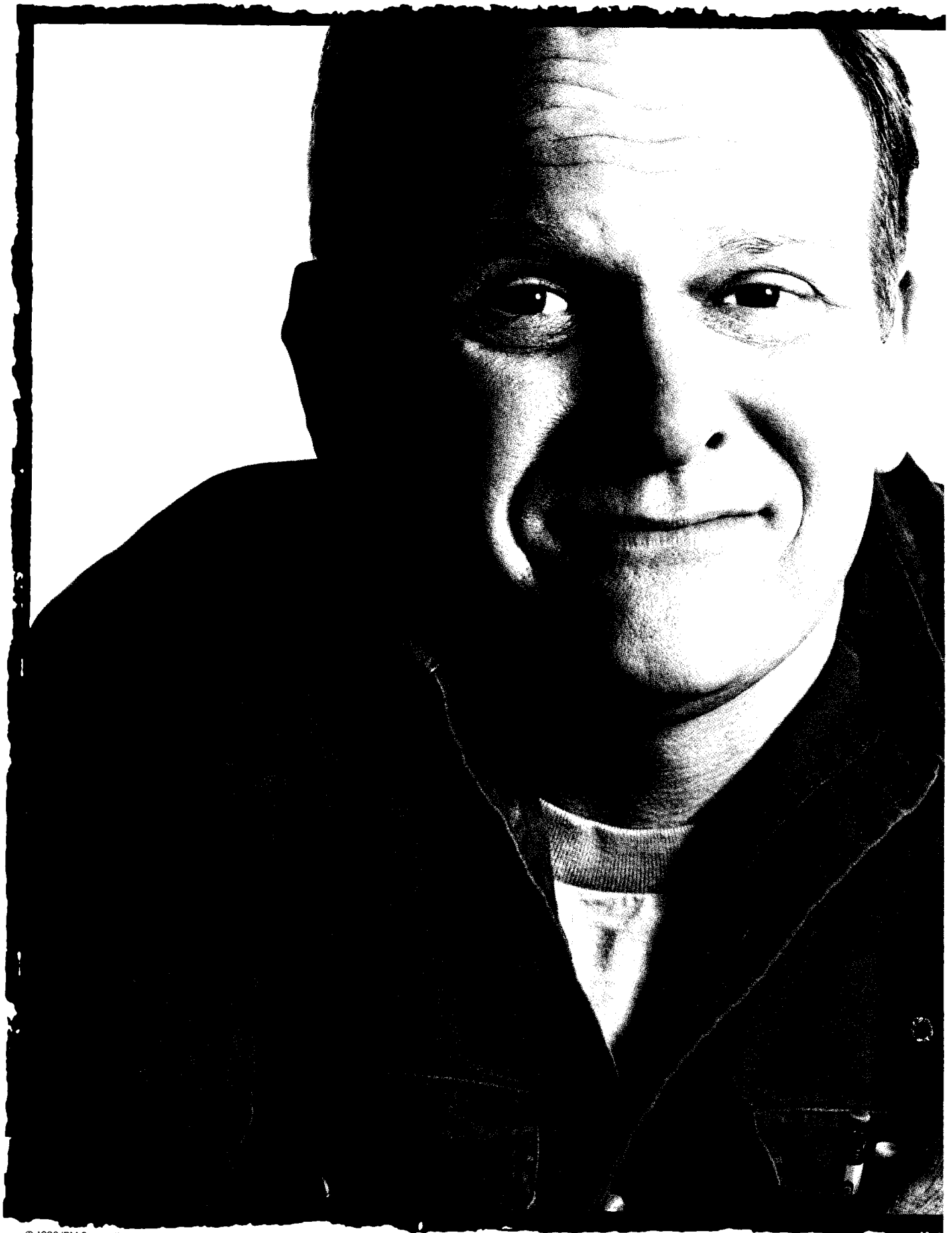
sick, thinking of what tonight was going to be like. Everything she went through, over the years. And the thing was, there didn't seem to be anything in particular that triggered it. When she met him, she told me, he was a kid who liked a drink. She did too. He'd get plowed, and sometimes she'd get plowed with him. But they were always okay afterward, and she couldn't say when he began not to stop. She'll tell you now she doesn't know where he went over the line and the stuff got ahold of him. You have to know that he was never the kind that got mean or violent either. That was the thing. You could always walk away from somebody who knocked you around. The worst he ever did was disappear, and he did that often enough for me to know that it was happen-

ing again. But when he started, it was always how much he loved everybody. He'd cry and be sad, and incredibly gentle. And when he was sober again, he was always very contrite. Sometimes he was good for months at a time, and when he was, you couldn't find anybody better as a companion and a friend. You could trust him with your life.

Which was why I let him go like I did, knowing what he was up to. I didn't for the life of me have the heart not to trust him one more time.

Anyway, I was going to paint all night. I was going to get it done. I figured that after a while, when we didn't show up, she'd come looking for us, and she'd know.

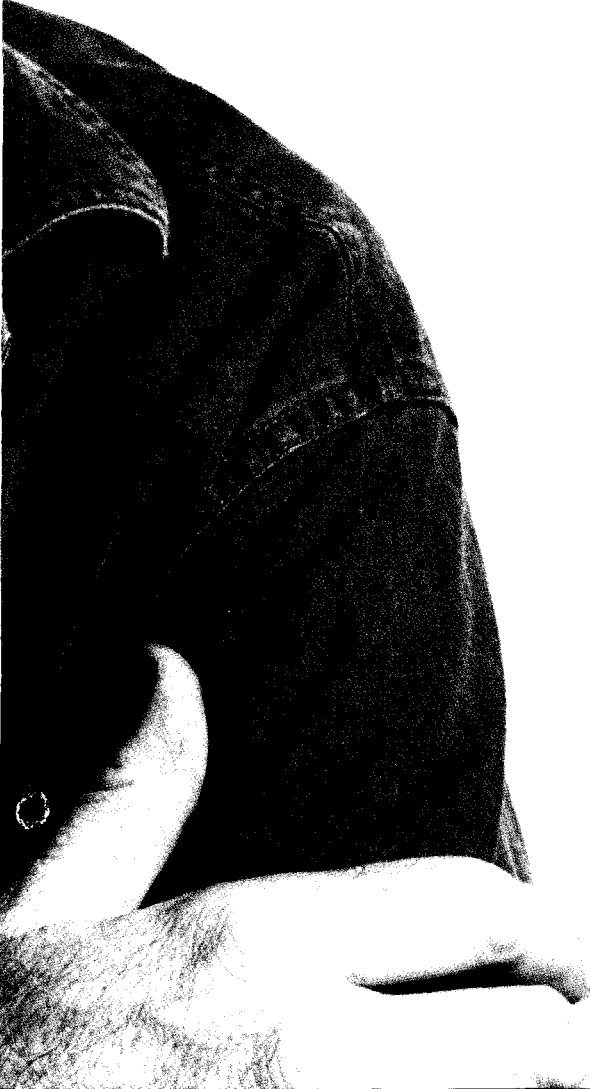




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She'd pull up and see the truck gone, and all the lights burning. I didn't want to have to look at her when she knew again, but I couldn't see a way around it.

I WORKED MAYBE AN HOUR. I GOT INTO THE WORK, INTO the rhythm of the whole task. We had the blaster there, but the tapes were all his: The Beatles and the Stones. Aretha Franklin. Rock-and-roll. Guitars and drums. The music sounds enough like what I like so I never complain. But I was just working in the quiet, and so I heard the truck pull in. I can't say what that did to me. He had gone to the bank, like he said. I mean that's what I thought. I heard the engine quit, the door open and close. I worked on. I wanted him to find me working. Then I thought I'd give him something. I put the Beatles on. The Beatles were all over that house. Revolution. I was in the dining room, moving myself to the music, and when I turned to smile at him, I saw the guy who was having this place built, the owner. Big, heavy bearded guy, looking like somebody with not much patience. I'd seen him walking around the lot when we first knew we were going to have the job and his house was nothing more than a hole in the ground.

"Hey," I said.

He was standing in the doorway, looking at me. I went over and turned the music off. He walked on into the family room. "You do nice work," he said. He was looking at the mantel. I saw several places that needed a touch. "Is it dry?" he said.

"Not quite yet," I said.

"Listen," he said. "Are you going to finish in two days?"

I nodded. I felt awful.

"You work fast," he said. "I was in here yesterday, and none of this was done yet."

"Yes, sir," I said.

"Looks good," he said. He was moving around the room now, appreciating everything. It *was* good work. We had done real good work together for this part of it.

When we got to the living room, which was the most finished, I said, "My dad's the one who painted in here."

"He does nice work," the guy said. "Very nice."

"Yes," I said. "My dad always says—you know, do a job with pride." If I started crying, I thought I might hit him. I never felt that way before. If he noticed something wrong anywhere, I just wasn't sure what would happen.

"It shows," he said, smiling at me. "The pride shows."

THE LATIN LESSON

Easter light in the convent garden.
The eucalyptus tree glitters in it.

A bell rings for
first class.

Today the Sixth Book of the Aeneid.
A nun calls after us down the corridor.

Manners, girls. Where
are your manners?

Last night in his Lenten talk
the parish priest asked us to remember
everything is put here
for a purpose:

even eucalyptus leaves are suitable
for making oil from to steep wool in,
to sweeten our gabardines
and blankets.

My forefinger crawls on the lines.
A storm light comes in from the bay.
How beautiful the words
look, how

vagrant and strange on the page,
before we crush them for their fragrance
and crush them again
to discover

the path down to hell where these
shadows in their shadow-bodies,
chittering and mobbing
on the far

shore, signaling their hunger for
the small usefulness of a life, are
the dead and how
before the bell

will I hail the black keel and flatter the dark
boatman and cross the river and still
keep a civil tongue
in my head?

—Eavan Boland

"Yeah," I said.

"You must be very proud of your dad." I looked at him. For a second I wasn't sure what he knew.

"What's it like, working with your father?"

"It's great," I said.

"Well." He turned and appreciated the room. "You don't find quality work these days. It's refreshing to find it."

"If you don't do a job right . . ." I said. I just wanted him to get out of there before something happened. I was breathing hard. I had this awful tightness in my throat, as if I were a kid and I'd got caught doing something wrong.

"These days," he said, "you give a kid an inch and he takes a mile, you know? Does your father trust you?"

"Sure," I said. I was watching the way his hands moved near his mouth. Something was on his nerves, and it made me nervous.

"You work like hell to give them something and a lot of them just throw it in your face. You know—drugs. Disobedience. Insolence, really. Hell, defiance. I think working like this, working alongside your father—I think that's a good thing. I wish I did something that my son could do with me, you know?"

I just nodded.

"You can't ask a kid to help you sell stocks in the summer. It's not a thing you can do together."

"No," I said.

"When I was your age, you know what I wanted to be? I wanted to be a carpenter. I sometimes wish I'd done it."

"Never too late," I said.

"I wouldn't know." He was thinking hard about something, looking off. Then he said, "I guess you communicate pretty well."

I didn't know what he meant.

"You and your father."

"Oh," I said. "Yeah." I couldn't look at him.

"Must—must be nice."

"It's okay," I said.

"You're about my son's age, aren't you? Finished high school a couple years ago?"

"Year ago," I said.

He nodded. "It's nice to see such respect for a father."

I didn't know what he wanted me to say to this.

He was quiet a long time, standing there looking at the room. "Well," he said finally. "Tell your dad I think he does very handsome work."

"I will," I told him.

"It sure looks nice," he said.

"Hard work," I said.

He smiled. "New money."

"Right," I said. "New money." I couldn't believe it.

"What's wrong?" he said.

"Nothing. My father says that—'new money.'"

"Oh, yeah. I don't know where that comes from."

"It comes from my father," I said.

He was thinking about something else. "Right," he said. "Well."

"That's the only place I've ever heard it," I said.

He looked at me with this expression, like he might ask me for a favor. It was almost hangdog. "I hope you both realize what you have."

I said, "Oh, right."

Then we stood there, looking at the room. It seemed like a long time.

"I'll let you get back to work," he said, and I headed away from him.

"It's a nice job," he said.

"An excellent job."

"People notice good

work," I said. I was just mouthing it now.

"Your dad teach you that?"

"That's it," I told him. I thought something might break in my chest. I just wanted to know why he wouldn't get out of there and let me get on with the job.

"That's what I learned," I said. And for half a second I could see it in his face, what he was thinking: how, between me and the man with the money to buy a big house like this, with its wraparound porch and its ten-acre lot and the intercom in the walls and three fireplaces and all the nice stuff that was going to be moved into it soon—how, between that man and me, I was the lucky one. □



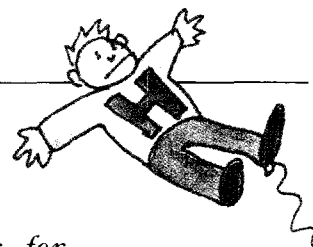


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*A widely copied core curriculum illustrates
the futility of trying to teach students to think like scientists, for
instance, without bothering to teach them much science*

HARVARD'S HOLLOW "CORE"

BY CALEB NELSON

EVEN BEFORE HARVARD'S CORE CURRICULUM made its debut, in 1979, *Saturday Review* hailed it as "a quiet revolution." The magazine was wrong on both counts: not only was the core unrevolutionary but it rapidly became one of the loudest curricula in America. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and other popular periodicals celebrated the new program, which required undergraduates to take special courses designed to reveal the methods—not the content—of the various academic disciplines. "Not since . . . 1945," *The Washington Post* said, "had the academic world dared to devise a new formula for developing 'the educated man.'" The reform was front-page news for *The New York Times*, and even network television covered it. Media enthusiasm continues today, with Edward Fiske, the former education editor of *The New York Times*, advising readers of *The Fiske Guide to Colleges*: "Back in the mid-1970s Harvard helped launch the current curriculum reform movement, and the core curriculum that emerged ranks as perhaps the most exciting collection of academic offerings in all of American higher education."

The core did indeed start a movement. A 1981 report issued by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching spoke of "the Harvard lead" and recommended a general-education program that put more emphasis on the "shared relationships common to all people" than on any particular facts. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill soon adopted the Harvard approach, and other schools have instituted programs that stress skills over facts. The structures of these programs vary, but the Harvard core's singular influence is suggested by Ernest Boyer's 1987 book *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America*. Boyer's survey of academic deans at colleges and universities nationwide found that the Harvard core was the most frequently mentioned example of a successful program of general education.

For their part, Harvard officials seem delighted with the program. A. Michael Spence, who just finished a six-

year term as dean of the faculty of arts and sciences, has labeled it "a smash hit"; President Derek Bok has heralded its "enormous success." Indeed, Bok, who will step down next year after two decades at the helm, said in 1983, when the faculty approved the continuation of the core, that the development of the program had given him more satisfaction than any other project undertaken during his presidency. In 1985 the members of Harvard's chief governing board showed that they had no complaints either when they elected the core's architect, Henry Rosovsky, to their number. (Rosovsky, who preceded Spence as dean of the faculty, has now been appointed acting dean while Harvard searches for Spence's permanent replacement.) The program recently marked its tenth anniversary, and no fundamental changes are on the horizon.

Yet the history of the core is a study in what's wrong with American universities. We often hear that our colleges are in decline because they lack what once guided them: a coherent vision of an educated person. Those who are tempted to dismiss such arguments as pretentious rhetoric should consider the Harvard core.

The Redbook Days

FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO HARVARD HAD A CLEAR idea of its mission. In 1945 it published a 267-page book laying out goals for educators, with the hope of giving American colleges and secondary schools a "unifying purpose and idea." The thrust of this volume, titled *General Education in a Free Society* but

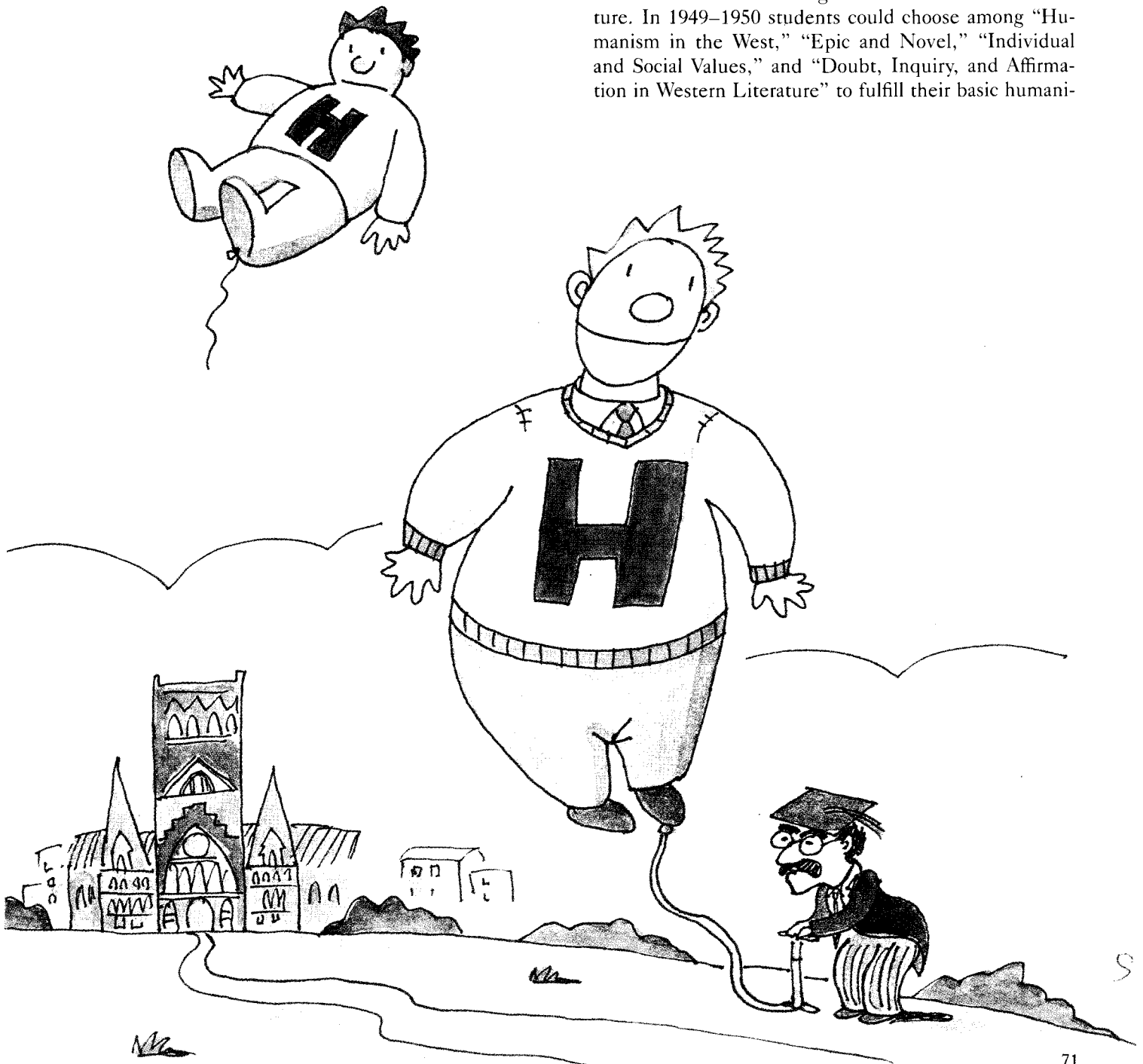


nicknamed "the Redbook," was that educational institutions should strive to create responsible democratic citizens, well versed in the heritage of the West and endowed with "the common knowledge and the common values on which a free society depends." As James Bryant Conant, then the president of Harvard, once summed up his goal, "Our purpose is to cultivate in the largest possible number of our future citizens an appreciation of both the responsibilities and the benefits which come to them because they are Americans and are free."

To accomplish this goal at Harvard, the Redbook recommended that every undergraduate be required to take

two full-year survey courses, tentatively called "Great Texts of Literature" and "Western Thought and Institutions," and a full-year course on the principles of either the physical or the biological sciences. The Harvard faculty balked at this specific program, but it endorsed the Redbook's essence. In each of three areas—the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences—it established a short list of approved courses. The general-education program was first required in the fall of 1949 and was fully phased in two years later, when all entering students were required to do two semesters of approved coursework in each area.

At the outset the courses strongly reflected Harvard's commitment to instructing students in democratic culture. In 1949–1950 students could choose among "Humanism in the West," "Epic and Novel," "Individual and Social Values," and "Doubt, Inquiry, and Affirmation in Western Literature" to fulfill their basic humani-



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ties requirement. The options in the social sciences were "Western Thought and Institutions," "The Growth of Modern Western Society," "Western Institutions and Thought," and "Introduction to the Development of Western Civilization." In the natural sciences students could take "Principles of Physical Science," "Principles of Biological Science," or "The Growth of the Experimental Sciences."

But philosophical and educational fashion moved away from the vision of President Conant and the Redbook, and Harvard let its curriculum follow the new trends. Where once the university had spoken strongly of the need to ground students in the Western tradition, in the mid-1960s the general-education program began to lose its unifying theme. Ever more courses were allowed to meet the basic requirements, until by 1969 the program included more than a hundred offerings. The character of most of these courses, moreover, was far different from that of the original group. The humanities featured titles like "The Scandinavian Cinema," "Creative Arts and Computing Machines," and "Narration in the Film: Theory and Practice." The social-sciences area came to include such classes as "Interplanetary and Intercontinental Cultural Diffusion and Contact," "Drug Use and Adolescent Development," and "The American Indian in the Contemporary United States." The natural-sciences area no longer included "Principles of Biological Science," but it did contain such "relevant" courses as "Biology and Social Issues," "Environmental Effects of

Power Generation," and "Introduction to Environmental Health."

The general-education program, which had once tried to provide a Harvard education with an overarching purpose, now tried merely to broaden students by exposing them to courses that did not fit into the traditional departments. Faithful to the new theories, Harvard declined to broaden its students in any particular direction; how they chose to fill their minds was their own business, and nobody could say that a course called "The Preindustrial City: Its Physical Form and Structural Characteristics" was any less worthwhile than a course on great literature. Harvard's general-education requirements had become value-free.

In keeping with these changes, in 1971 the program became a mere set of distribution requirements. Students were allowed to substitute, on a two-for-one basis, courses taught in Harvard's various departments for courses taught under the auspices of the general-education program. With this reform Harvard expunged any lingering vestiges of the Redbook philosophy that students need a broad interdisciplinary overview of fundamental topics to put their departmental work in its proper context.

The general atmosphere at Harvard was reflected in the rise of independent study. As the associate dean for academic planning Phyllis Keller writes in her 1982 book *Getting at the Core: Curricular Reform at Harvard*, "By 1967, through student initiative, access to Independent

Studies had become so flexible that any faculty member could arrange for any student to do virtually anything under the sun for academic credit." Richard Norton Smith, the author of *The Harvard Century: The Making of a University to a Nation* (1986), reports that some students received academic credit for "evaluating the nutritional content of their own diets" and that others were similarly rewarded for scuba diving. The dilution of standards was highlighted in 1979, when *Sports Illustrated* reported that twenty students were receiving academic credit for studying the Harvard football team's offense under the tutelage of the quarterback.

A "Content-Free" Scheme

BUT EDUCATIONAL FASHION CHANGED AGAIN. THE state of Harvard's undergraduate curriculum began to provoke widespread dissatisfaction, and the administration sought a suitable reform. In 1974 Henry Rosovsky, then the dean of the faculty, called for a review of the curriculum as a prelude to change.

Yet although Harvard officials wanted to reform the curriculum, they did not want to launch divisive arguments within the faculty about which subjects were most important. The Harvard administration had learned long before that to commit itself to a particular educational vision was to draw fire. In 1963, for instance, a group of Harvard professors tried to modify the general-education program, only to be met by what Phyllis Keller calls "the avalanche of faculty criticism that buried every specific proposal to change the structure of requirements." The faculty found itself unable to agree on any specific content for the general-education program, and simply threw up its hands; it encouraged the introduction of all kinds of different general-education courses by directing the program to become "quite sensitive to innovation and change."

With this experience to reflect upon, in the seventies Harvard devised a novel scheme to avoid discord while still reforming its curriculum. If "every specific proposal" for reform raised a fire storm, the college would simply avoid specifics. Rather than emphasize knowledge, the new core curriculum would stress students' critical faculties. The report of the task force that proposed the new requirements explained:

Everything depends on what questions the faculty tries to answer. If it is asked what bodies of knowledge are more or less important, it almost surely will come to no conclusion. There are simply too many facts, too many theories, too many subjects, too many specializations to permit arranging all knowledge into an acceptable hierarchy. But if the faculty is asked instead what intellectual skills, what distinctive ways to thinking, are identifiable and important, it is not clear that either the "knowledge explosion" or the size of the faculty has made that question unanswerable.

The intellectual style that elevates subjective process over objective fact meshed perfectly with the administration's reluctance to launch an intrinsically controversial discussion of what subjects should be at the core of a Harvard education. As Anthony Oettinger, a professor of applied mathematics, said about the resulting proposal, "This motion . . . cannot fail to pass; it has become totally content-free."

If the administration promoted the new core curriculum from a desire to preserve consensus, the faculty had its own reasons for going along. While the curriculum was being debated, Yale University offered Dean Rosovsky its presidency; Rosovsky declined the invitation on the grounds that he wanted to see the core through. This decision, according to Smith's *Harvard Century*, had far-reaching consequences:

Sociologist George [Goethals], who calls the final curriculum "a farce," speaks for many of his colleagues: "It got through the faculty . . . because everyone loves Henry." This view was seconded by another professor, who credited the dean's refusal to leave Cambridge as a turning point in the faculty's consideration of the reform. "We felt we owed him something," he explained.

Yet it is doubtful that the faculty needed this extra spur to make it accept the core curriculum. As long as the debate remained on the level of educational theory rather than course content, most professors seemed bored but acquiescent. After all, as Professor David Riesman said at the time, "a minority of the faculty is interested in educational issues"; thus Professor James Ackerman sensed that the core's passage might be due "more to indifference than enthusiasm." Whatever the motivation, in 1978 the faculty approved the new program in a three-to-one landslide.

A Strange Bunch of Distribution Requirements

THE CORE, WHICH STILL EXISTS TODAY, IS A SET of courses divided into ten categories—Social Analysis, Moral Reasoning, Historical Study A & B, Science A & B, Foreign Cultures, and Literature and Arts A, B, & C. Students are required to take at least one course from each of eight of these ten areas; they are exempt from the two areas that most closely resemble their major.

The areas themselves are odd assemblages of specialized classes watered down for the nonspecialist. The following list, drawn from the 1989–1990 course catalogue, gives a sampling of the core:

Foreign Cultures—"Building the Shogun's Realm: The Unification of Japan (1560–1650)"

Historical Study A—"The 'Eastern Question' to the 'Middle East Problem' (1774–1984)"

Why it's important to establish a National En

A "SHORT-TERM" PROBLEM WILL TAKE DECADES AND COST BILLIONS.

Alarmed by the poisoning of our environment at Love Canal and other toxic waste sites, Congress created the Superfund program ten years ago. Superfund was intended to be a short-term cleanup program for the most serious hazardous waste sites across the country.

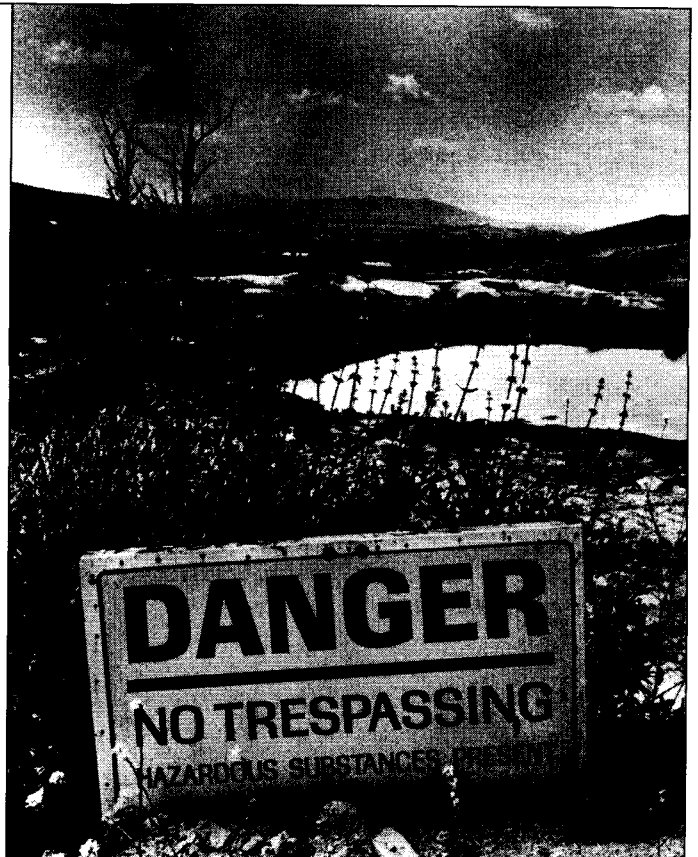
More than a decade later, it's painfully clear that cleaning up hazardous waste is not a short-term problem for America. It will take many decades and cost hundreds of billions of dollars.

Currently, 1,200 of the most dangerous sites have been selected for priority action. Billions of dollars have been spent, but very few sites have been cleaned up. In fact, only 45.

SO FAR, ABOUT ALL WE'VE DONE WITH HAZARDOUS WASTE IS WASTE TIME AND MONEY.

One problem is that Superfund requires establishing liability—who sent what waste, how much and where. And this has taken priority over cleaning up. With the cost of cleanup at just one site estimated as high as one hundred million dollars, the question of who pays has serious consequences for everyone involved.

At most hazardous waste sites, the operator of the dump caused the environmental harm. But under Superfund,



everyone who used the site is liable for the cleanup bill. The record of users can go back 25, 30 or 40 years and can number in the hundreds. Users can include major corporations, small businesses, local governments, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, even individuals.

For example, at 422 sites almost 14,000 entities have been notified by the government that they could be liable for the cleanup cost. And many of these entities have themselves identified still others.

The result? A bonanza for lawyers and

put cleanup first and vironmental Trust Fund.

consultants. And a tragedy for the environment. At some sites, as much as 60% of the money spent goes toward legal expenses in costly and time-consuming efforts to assign liability instead of solving the cleanup problem. An avalanche of lawsuits has resulted, all aimed at getting someone else to pay.

HERE'S AN IDEA THAT DESERVES EVERYONE'S CONSIDERATION.

At AIG, we think it's high time to find a better approach to the problem of cleaning up old hazardous waste sites. One that encourages prompt cleanup and spreads the cost more broadly. And more equitably.

We propose creating a National Environmental Trust Fund similar to the National Highway Trust Fund. Its resources would be used exclusively for cleaning up old hazardous waste sites.

The Fund could be financed by adding a separate fee to commercial and industrial insurance premiums in the United States.

Even a modest assessment, say 2% of premiums and an equivalent amount for self insurers, would provide about \$40 billion over the next decade, more than enough to deal with the 1,200 highest-priority sites.

A national advisory board of private citizens, industry and public officials could be charged with overseeing the program. We also suggest giving consideration to establishing local technical monitoring committees in each community. These

groups would be composed of local citizens, industry and others who would work with the Environmental Protection Agency and the state on the particular cleanup site, from the very beginning of the cleanup effort.

Just think. A new way to finance Superfund's mission without the need for new taxes, a new government agency or expensive and unproductive lawsuits.

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We've started this dialogue to encourage people like you to help shape the future. Perhaps you'll want to keep the ball rolling by contacting your elected officials, or an environmental or trade group. We hope you will. Shouldn't we stop trying to fix the blame and start fixing the problem?

If you agree with this idea or have thoughts of your own to share, write to Mr. M.R. Greenberg, Chairman, AIG, 70 Pine Street, New York, NY 10270.

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and financial services.

Historical Study B—"Power and Society in Medieval Europe: The Crisis of the 12th Century"

Literature and Arts A—"Oral Literature: An Introduction to Folklore and Mythology"

Literature and Arts B—"The Age of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent: Art, Architecture, and Ceremonial at the Ottoman Court"

Literature and Arts C—"The Imagery of the Modern Metropolis: Pictorial and Literary Representations of New York and Berlin from 1880 to 1940"

Moral Reasoning—"Confucian Humanism and Moral Community"

Science A—"States of Matter: Order, Disorder, and Broken Symmetries"

Science B—"Plants and Biological Principles in Human Affairs"

Social Analysis—"Culture, Illness, and Healing: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Medicine in Society"

The core's esoteric course titles strongly resemble those prevalent during the waning days of the general-education program. Indeed, soon after the core made its debut, one junior faculty member called it "old garbage in new pails."

The Harvard administration, though, rejects the notion that the core is merely a strange bunch of distribution requirements. In the words of the course catalogue,

The Core differs from other programs of general education. It does not define intellectual breadth as the mastery of a set of Great Books, or the digestion of a specific quantum of information, or the surveying of current knowledge in certain fields. Rather, the Core seeks to introduce students to the major *approaches to knowledge* in areas that the faculty considers indispensable to undergraduate education. It aims to show what kinds of knowledge and what forms of inquiry exist in these areas, how different means of analysis are acquired, how they are used, and what their value is.

The philosophy behind the core is that educated people are not those who have read many books and have learned many facts but rather those who could analyze facts if they should ever happen to encounter any, and who could "approach" books if it were ever necessary to do so. Facts may change or become irrelevant, but analytic faculties will always be useful. "We live in a revolutionary era," Dean Rosovsky once explained to the undergraduate daily, *The Harvard Crimson*, "where theories and facts can be crammed in, but ten years later, you'll forget them." As Rosovsky later observed, "you have to prepare the mind to deal with change without emphasis on certain facts."

One suspects, however, that Harvard's philosophical commitment to emphasizing analysis over content is weak, because the core is not above stressing content

when it seems politically expedient to do so. While all students can meet their core requirements without taking a single course that focuses on Western culture, most are required to study a non-Western culture. Indeed, the rhetoric surrounding the core's Foreign Cultures requirement differs fundamentally from that surrounding all the other core areas; it alone emphasizes matter over method. In the words of the course catalogue, "The Core requirement in Foreign Cultures is designed to expand the range of cultural experience and to provide fresh perspectives on one's own cultural assumptions and traditions."

Foreign Cultures courses do not pretend to teach students to think like cultural anthropologists, well versed in the analytic tools that would let them critically assess other cultures. There is reason to believe, in fact, that the courses actively exclude critical approaches. In the October, 1987, issue of *The Harvard Salient*, a campus political monthly that I was then editing, a student named Arthur Long wrote about his experience in Foreign Cultures 12, "Sources of Indian Civilization":

The class strongly discouraged us from critically assessing Indian society, because—in the words of other students—doing so invariably involves looking at matters with "our own Western preconceptions." Hence when discussing the caste system, we overlooked how untouchability has institutionalized slavery; instead we asserted that, at least before British imperialists began to impose Western values on India, caste made for a more compassionate universe than we know in America.

The oddities of the Foreign Cultures requirement are highlighted by the absence of any corresponding Western-culture requirement. Although a Western-culture requirement was initially proposed by the task force that developed the core curriculum, it was later scrapped in the face of faculty opposition. Indeed, in the ten years after 1978—when the professor who had taught the basic Redbook course "Western Thought and Institutions" retired—no survey of Western civilization was even offered.

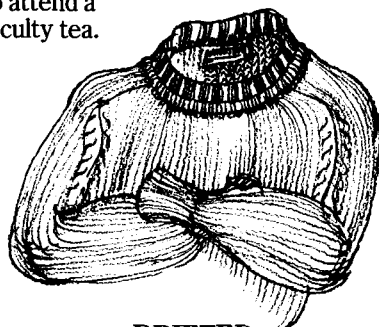
For a school averse to controversial educational stands, this peculiar state of affairs was predictable. Since the sixties, Western-civilization requirements have been loudly denounced as narrow-minded at best and racist at worst. Such requirements, the argument goes, slight non-Western peoples and mythologize a West that has in fact committed its share of barbarisms. Many universities have accordingly de-emphasized the West. Only relatively recently has the spotlight shifted to the critics—as politically diverse as William Bennett and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.—who observe that whatever its faults the West is the font of freedom, and that since we must ground ourselves in one culture before we can fully appreciate others, it is both natural and necessary for Western schools to teach Western heritage.

Phyllis Keller, whose book on the core's creation staunchly defends the program's underlying philosophy,

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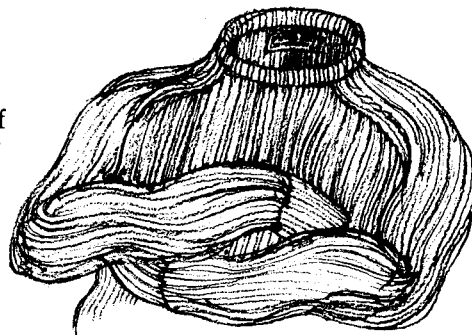
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we think.**

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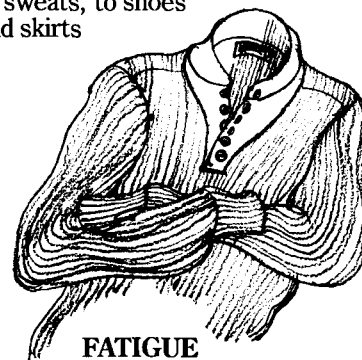
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neglects ethnocentrism when she catalogues the arguments that were used to justify the omission of the Western-culture requirement. But the arguments that she does list are all unpersuasive.

First, Keller reports, "One problem with the survey of Western civilization was that it was often boring for both faculty and students." As a result, "it seemed highly improbable that faculty members would undertake responsibility for such a course with any degree of continuing enthusiasm." This claim says little for Harvard's much-vaunted faculty. If every Harvard professor would be bored by introducing students to the staples of Western literature and philosophy, then Harvard has no business dealing with undergraduates; it should confine itself to specialized graduate study. Fortunately, at least some professors do seem to be interested in teaching a Western-culture survey course. "Western Societies, Politics, and Cultures" was introduced last year as a non-core elective in the history department, under the supervision of one or two professors each semester and with guest lectures by a number of other faculty members.

A related argument on Keller's list is that a Western-culture requirement was largely unnecessary: "Many students had studied 'the facts' of history in high school; while such exposure was by no means universal, it was surely widespread." Many students have also read novels in high school, yet literature remains a division of the core. Presumably college courses can treat more topics in more-sophisticated ways than can high school courses. Few ninth-graders, after all, can fully grasp Kant. If Harvard believes that it cannot cover subjects any better than a typical high school, it should shut down.

Keller's list continues:

The utility of a Western civilization requirement would also depend entirely on strict sequencing: this course would have to be taken before all the other courses for which it was supposed to provide background. That was likely to interfere with course sequences needed for certain concentrations and with other basic college requirements.

Since all freshmen are required to take an expository writing class, it is hard to believe that they could not also be required to take a Western-culture class. Columbia University, for instance, manages to impose such a requirement very successfully. But in any event, familiarity with the great works and great events of Western culture is not simply "background" for one's classes in pictorial representations of Berlin. It is important in its own right.

In Keller's opinion, "the most compelling argument" advanced against a Western-culture component of the core was that such a requirement would be inconsistent with the philosophy behind the core, with its stress on analytic methods. Under the core's rationale, "the facts of history—without derogating their importance—appear to be infinitely forgettable." But there is no reason to assume that students can develop their critical faculties

only when they are studying esoteric books and events and not well-known ones. Keller's argument, moreover, is vitiated by the fact that Foreign Cultures courses have no pretensions to teaching analytic methods.

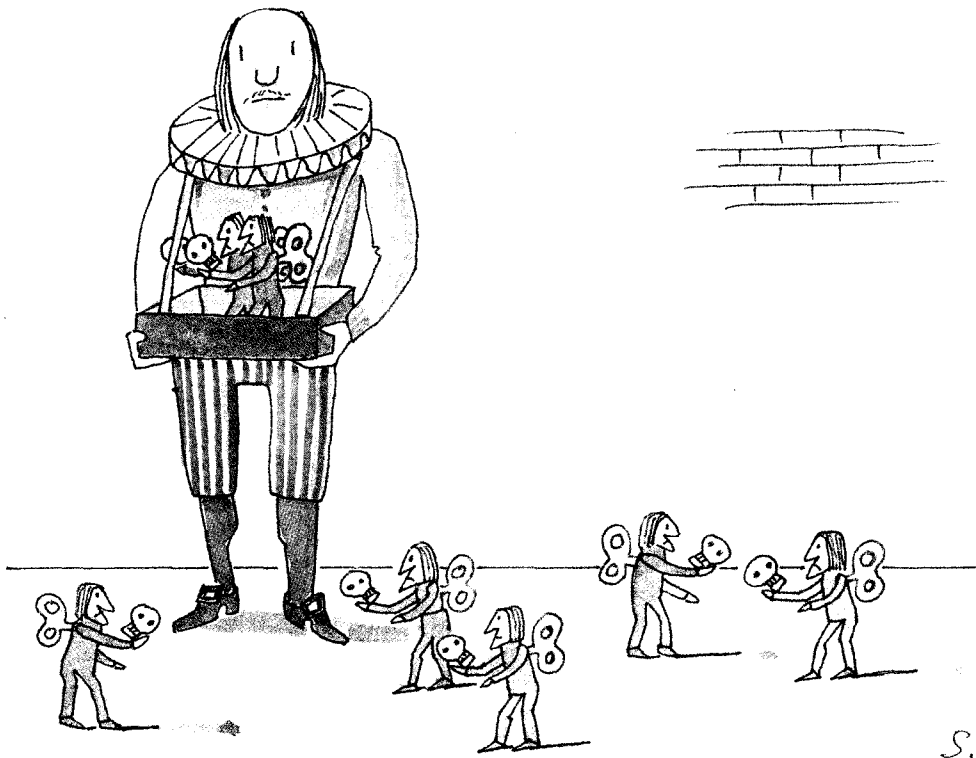
It is difficult to imagine that the arguments that Keller lists could, by themselves, have persuaded the faculty to reject a Western-culture requirement. One must suspect that the faculty was also worried that such a requirement would be, or would seem, ethnocentric—a concern that had surfaced repeatedly during the faculty's debates on the core. This suspicion is supported by the fact that when the tides shifted and vocal advocates of teaching Western culture gained unexpected prominence in the mid-1980s, the history department created its new "Western Societies, Politics, and Cultures"—the result, a professor told the *Crimson*, of the increased demand for such a survey course. Even so, Harvard still seems wary of charges of ethnocentrism. According to the *Crimson*, "History professors said . . . that the department intentionally refrained from naming the new class 'Western Civilization,' fearing such a title would offend some people."

Trying to Think Like a Physicist Without Knowing Physics

IF THE CORE AROSE MORE FROM THE ADMINISTRATION'S desire to avoid conflict than from any commitment to the ostensible philosophy behind the program, one should not be surprised that the core has failed to live up to the administration's claims. In 1987 the *Salient* conducted a random telephone survey of 200 undergraduates. More than 80 percent of the students polled said that most core courses do not "introduce students to approaches to knowledge" but "simply teach students about a particular subject." More than three quarters of the respondents rejected the course catalogue's claim that "the courses within each area or subdivision of the [core] are equivalent in the sense that, while their subject matter may vary, their emphasis on a particular way of thinking is the same." The same number of respondents, furthermore, said that departmental courses are at least as good as core courses at introducing students to "approaches to knowledge," and 40 percent believed that departmental courses are better at this task.

Oddly, the college implicitly grants that departmental courses teach students just as much about analytic methods as core courses, and hence that there is no true justification for the core scheme. Since students are not required to take courses in the two core areas that most closely resemble their majors, Harvard must admit either that it lets students graduate without teaching them how to approach their chosen fields or that departmental courses are as successful as core courses in helping students develop intellectual skills.

The administration's claims about the special nature of



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core courses can be assessed accurately on the basis of a single episode. In 1988, when a course on the history of jazz moved from the music department to the core, Harvard refused to grant core credit to the students who had taken the course before its move, on the grounds that it had been changed to become suitable for the core. But the administration also refused to let them take the course again, on the grounds that the new core course was not substantially different from its departmental predecessor. When the students angrily objected, Harvard quelled the incipient controversy by changing its mind and granting them core credit.

Professors have seemed equally confused ever since the core system was adopted. In 1980 the *Crimson* reported that "most professors, section leaders and students interviewed this week were unable to say what made their [Literature and Arts] Core courses different from any other courses."

The problem goes beyond the particular courses that are now in the core: no set of introductory courses could achieve the core's ostensible goals. One cannot think like a physicist, for instance, without actually knowing a great deal of physics. To be sure, one can understand the basic steps in the scientific process—forming hypotheses, testing them, revising them—without knowing any scientific facts. But precisely for that reason, such an understanding is so superficial that it is well within the reach of most schoolchildren. To have a deeper awareness of how scientists approach problems, one must be familiar with

the complex interplay of the scientific principles that underlie both the problems and their solutions. In short, one must have studied much science before one can have a useful idea of how scientists operate.

Even in the humanities the core's failure to meet its stated goals was inevitable. The core's history courses, for instance, can have little to do with historical methods. Not only must they leave analyses of historical technique to specialists but—since entering students are presumed to be ignorant of scholarly methods—the courses cannot very well demand any original research. Of necessity, core history courses focus exclusively on their respective subjects.

Phyllis Keller anticipates this argument in her book, and asserts that the subjects themselves are carefully chosen to impart certain lessons about the utility and complexity of history as a discipline. Historical Study A subjects are selected to show students "how historical study helps to make sense of the great issues of our time"; according to the core planners Keller quotes, classes in the B group reveal "the confusion of circumstance, purpose, and accident that inevitably shapes people's lives," and thereby teach students that "there are very few heroes and very few villains, and that only false history makes easy judgments possible." These lessons are not necessarily consistent; while the A group points to patterns in history, the B group seems to deny their existence. But in any event, even students who successfully grasp the lessons acquire no new intellectual techniques.

Like students in every other discipline, they can develop the relevant analytic faculties only slowly, through a coherent and comprehensive study of the subject's substance.

If the core's stated goals were realistic, they would still have little to recommend them. Why, for instance, are lessons about the nature of history as a discipline the most important things for students to learn in their required history course? Students certainly should recognize that history is the testing ground of public policy, and that its study can reveal much about the psychology of people and nations; as Santayana's famous aphorism goes, those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. But this lesson *about* history is useless unless one also learns the actual lessons *of* history—an accomplishment that requires careful attention to historical facts themselves. When Harvard suggests that its mission is finished once students learn that historical study can be useful, the college abdicates its educational responsibility at a crucial point: it lets students decide for themselves whether to study the actual substance of history, beyond the incidental amount that they find in their core courses. Regardless of their decision, Harvard willingly certifies their educational attainments by awarding them diplomas.

Indeed, the entire core is designed to let Harvard gracefully excuse itself from the controversial duty of making such decisions for students. In Literature and Arts A, for instance, Harvard does not care whether students take a class about Shakespeare or one titled "Beast Literature." The area includes such special-interest courses as "African American Women Writers," "Chivalric Romances of the Middle Ages," and "Epic Fiction International"—for Harvard is unwilling to assert that the novels of Salman Rushdie are any less important than Shakespeare's plays or the Bible. In the words of the leader of the initial core task force, the idea "was not to make choices for students, but rather to equip them with the ability to make the choices for themselves."

Before the core can ever equip students to make choices, however, students must make an uninformed choice about which core class to take. Those who choose to study Rushdie learn nothing of Shakespeare; if they opt to take a subsequent course on Shakespeare's works, it is only because they have made another uninformed decision. The core is therefore ill designed even to guide students in structuring their own educations.

A Weak Educational Vision

THE CORE NOT ONLY EXPLICITLY DENIES THE value of giving students any particular core of knowledge but also skews the range of knowledge that students might be able to pick up. It contains no course on mathematics, a discipline better suited than most to teaching methods of analysis. The

core offers no introductory foreign-language course. Its coverage of science—especially the more quantitative physical sciences—is widely considered laughable; as Frank Westheimer, a professor of chemistry, asserted when the core was proposed, the program represents science as having "a minor, perhaps only a trivial, place in the intellectual heritage of mankind." The core lacks a general survey of the history of even one Western nation, although it does contain survey courses on China, India, and Japan. It offers students no broad look at literature or art, at music or philosophy.

Ezekiel Emanuel, who five years ago served as the head section leader for the largest core Moral Reasoning course while he attended Harvard Medical School, wrote in a 1983 editorial in the *Crimson*, "Most Harvard students taking Core courses are no more likely to have read and seriously understood the philosophical, political, or cultural foundations of their own United States than if they selected 32 random courses [the number of courses required for an undergraduate degree] from the catalogue."

In 1978 Henry Rosovsky justified the core to *People* magazine in this way: "What's at stake is the restoration of common discourse in which all students can share." But that is exactly what Harvard has lost. Common discourse would require students to be familiar with some of the same authors, to know some of the same history, and to have learned some of the same philosophies—in short, to have gone through a program such as the one outlined by the Redbook. It would therefore require Harvard to take the controversial step of defining a canon. The administration is unwilling to do so.

As a result, students can graduate from Harvard without ever having studied the books that are commonly considered great or the events that are commonly considered most important. In the 1989–1990 catalogue, for instance, no core Literature and Arts course lists any of the great nineteenth-century British novelists among the authors studied, nor does any list such writers as Virgil, Milton, and Dostoevsky. In the core's history areas even students who did the impossible and took every single course would not focus on any Western history before the Middle Ages, nor would they study the history of the Enlightenment, the Renaissance, the American Civil War, or a host of other topics that one might expect a core to cover. To be sure, students can learn about these things on their own or in the individual departments, and they can leave Harvard with a very good education. But the whole point of having a core curriculum is to make the process less chancy.

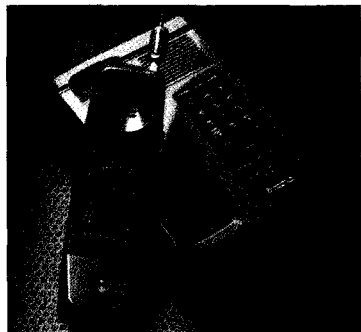
Harvard's stature and the media's lavish praise have made the core one of the most influential curricula in America, but it is hollow. It owes its existence to Harvard's willingness to sacrifice content in order to preserve consensus. A decade of experience has exposed the poverty of this approach. □

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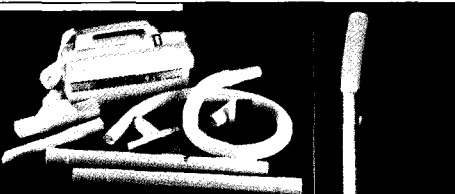
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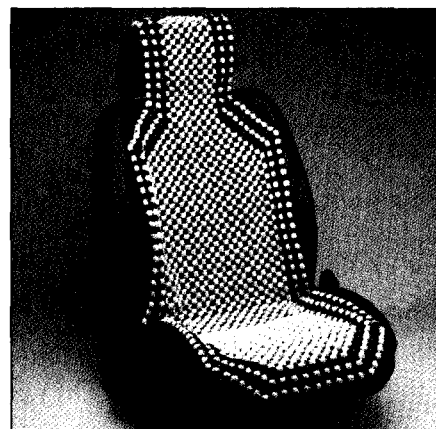
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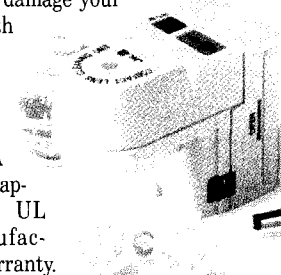
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Time: The recent past. Place: the Mexican peninsula of Yucatán, and points south. The tale is told by Jimmy Burns, a drifter from Louisiana, who is pulled headlong into a dark tangle of events. It seems there are some strange birds of passage in Mayaland. A sampling of the new novel by the author of *True Grit*.

GRINGOS

by CHARLES PORTIS

YOU PUT THINGS OFF AND THEN ONE MORNING you wake up and say—today I will change the oil in my truck. West of Mérida there was a clearing or series of clearings in the dense scrub thicket that covers Yucatán. It was a garbage dump where I changed my oil, adding my bit to the mess. Wisps of greasy smoke rose here and there from smoldering trash. Fumaroles from Hell. The air was so foul here that the rats couldn't take it. A city dump and not a rat to be seen. I parked on a sandy slope and while the oil was draining I shot grease into the fittings. Then I let the truck roll back, away from the oil puddle so I could lie on my back in a relatively clean place and replace the drain plug and the filter. I poured oil into the filter before screwing it on, to prevent dry scuffing on start-up. It was a little trick I had picked up from a cab driver.

A car drove up. Doors slammed. I saw legs and heard American voices.

"What is this guy doing out here?"

"All by himself."

"Long-bed pickup with Louisiana plate. Some kind of sharecropper."

"With a stupid accent. Like Red."

"I've seen that truck before."

"Wait, don't tell me. I believe this guy is—*working on his car!*"

"That's all those cotton-choppers do. Day and night."

"They listen to car races on the radio."

I slid out from beneath the truck. A gang of hippies had piled out of an old Ford station wagon. They called themselves The Jumping Jacks, which name was stuck across the rear window, in letters made from strips of silver tape. The letters had an angular, runic look. The number of these clowns varied. I made them out to be seven this time, three males and four females, though they were hard to count, like the *chaneques* in the woods. Anyway, a full load for the old Ford Country Squire.

Back in October at Tuxpan they had stolen three ignition wires from my truck. I saw them there on the waterfront as I was going into a café. When I came out they were gone and my wires were gone and a newsboy told me the gringo *tóxicos* in the Ford *guayín*, the station wagon, had been under my hood. I hadn't seen them since but the car was unmistakable—cracked glass, no wheel covers, a red sock stuffed in the gas filler spout. Once black, the wagon was now streaked and blotched. They had painted it white with

brushes, using some kind of water-based paint. A lot of it had peeled off in long curls. It was the only paint job I had ever seen blow away.

The leader was a big fellow with dirt necklaces in the fleshy creases of his neck, a fat man in his forties, with curly black beard, silver earrings, a fringed black vest with no shirt underneath, a rotting blue bandana on his head, and loose white *campesino* trousers. They





were cinched up with a rope like pajamas and the bottoms were stuffed into green canvas jungle boots. Big Dan looked like a wrestling act, beef gone to fat, but with his costume not quite worked out. It wasn't all of a piece yet. Maybe an old biker. Almost certainly an ex-convict. I could see the letters *AB*—for Aryan Brotherhood—tattooed under his left breast. It was a rough, homemade job done with a pin and spit and burnt match-heads.

He grinned at me, coming forward with a knobby walking stick, taking golf chops at cans and clods. The others hung back. The two boys were much younger than Dan. A pair of cue balls, these fellows, with shaved heads and vacant eyes. Much better than long hair. No hair at all meant you were at a more advanced

stage of revolt. One of the girls, or a tall woman rather with lank brown hair, squatted where she stood and lifted her skirt and took a long noisy leak right there on the ground in front of everybody.

My name is Jimmy Burns but Dan called me Curtis. He said, "Merry Christmas to you, Curtis."

"You too."

"And *mucho* happiness for the new year."

The girls laughed. I had seen one of them before, and not, I thought, in connection with this crew. She was a little rabbit they called Red, standing about barefooted on the hot sand. She looked like a Dust Bowl child, a bony waif in a thin cotton dress that hung straight down to her knees. I had seen that face before but couldn't place it.

Dan said, "Well, did you get it fixed?"

"Just about."

"Curtis says he's just about got his truck fixed. What a relief that must be."

The girls laughed again.

"Hey, pal, just having a little fun. My name is Dan. These are my friends. We're The Jumping Jacks and we come from the Gulf of Molo."

"Where is that?"

"It's beyond your understanding, I'm afraid."

"Then why tell me at all?"

"Hey, don't come back at me so fast. We're getting off on the wrong foot here. I was hoping you might be able to help us. We lost all our things. We rely on charity, you see, for our daily needs."

"You came to a poor country to do your begging."

"Not just to beg."

The others chimed in.

"We came down here to clarify our thoughts."

"We have found the correct path."

"Big Dan, he is a lot of man. He is one set apart."

"We have fled the madness and found the gladness."

"People call us trash and throw turnips at us."

"Dan is more than our father."

"We're on our way to the Inaccessible City of Dawn."

"But El Mago didn't show up."

Dan spoke sharply to them. "Hey, none of that now. Didn't I tell you about that? Not another word on that." He turned back to me. "I can see you are not a person of wide sympathy, Curtis. Nothing escapes me. I can see right into your soul. Would you believe we have now made twenty-four enemies in the North and twenty-four enemies in the South? No lie. You are exactly the twenty-fourth person in Mexico to find us loathsome and undesirable."

"I would believe fifty-four, Dan."

"Hey! Would you listen to this guy? He keeps coming right back at me!"

He jabbered away and I went on with my work, opening cans of oil. There was a rustling in the thicket. It was a browsing goat, a billy goat, shouldering his way through the brush. His coat was the color of wet sand.

Dan became agitated. "A goat! After him! An unblemished ram! Get that goat!"

The two boys went crashing into the thicket.

"You too, Red! Go, go! I want that animal! Get him! His name is Azazel! He's carrying off all the sins of the people! I must lay my hands on him and say some words!"

"And cut his throat!" said the tall woman.

Red dashed off to help. The other two girls took up the cry, facing each other and going into a hand-slapping game. "Get that goat and cut his throat! Get that

goat and cut his throat! What does Dan say? Dan says get the goat. What does Beany say? Beany says cut his throat . . ."

I finished with the oil and slammed the hood down. I had lost sight of Dan. He had wandered around to the back of the truck and was poking about inside with his stick. When I got there he was pulling the top off a can of my Vienna sausages.

He raised the can to me and said, "Your good health," and drank off the juice. "Soup of the day. Do you have any bread?"

"No."

"I can eat these things plain but let me tell you—say, you didn't take us for vegetarians, did you? Wandering herbivores?"

"I hadn't thought about it."

"People get us all wrong. We gladly eat the flesh of animals. When we can get it. Why would God give us sharp teeth if not to rend and tear things with? Let me tell you how I usually go about this. There are seven of these little men to a can. I take three slices of bread and make three foldover sandwiches, with two sausages to each piece of bread, don't you see. Then I take the seventh one, the odd man, and just pop it into my mouth naked, like a grape. I've done it that way for years and now you tell me you don't have no bread."

I said nothing. He shrugged and ate the sausages. "Do you have anything else to spare? I mean like sardines or beer or shoes or *Mexicano* rum? Just anything in that line. I like your sleeping bag, all rolled up nice and tight like that. Your plastic lantern too. I'll bet that thing comes in handy. Does it float or blink or have some special features I should know about? We could use a good light. The nights are long and we stumble in darkness. Maybe we could look through your stuff and just pick out what we want. I know you must set great store by all these material possessions but look here, my friend, it's the season for giving and you have so much."

More laughter from the girls. The tall woman said, "Or maybe he could just lend us a million pesos till payday."

"That's not a bad idea, Beany Girl. It works out well for him too. We get *mucho dinero* for our pressing needs and he gets to keep all his much prized possessions. But I don't know about this guy. You might think he would say, 'See see, *Seenyore*, your house is my house and my house is your house,' but no, not this guy. Ask Curtis for bread and he don't even give you a stone."

His jocular manner had a dark edge to it that was meant to be unsettling, but it was a transparent act, a bit of old movie business, not well done. The two boys and little Red came back with no goat. A child can hem up a goat but these three couldn't catch a goat. They talked about it. Beany Girl said that they

hadn't really tried. There was a silence. Then, on what must have been a signal from Dan, all of them picked up rocks and looked at me. They stood perfectly still with their mouths gaping. They were a clan of early hunters in a museum diorama. And the rocks were big, not missiles but clubs.

I was wiping my hands on a rag and moving to the cab. I said, "Well, I guess I can spare a few beers. I keep some cans of Modelo in a cooler behind the seat here." I had rigged up a shallow storage compartment back there, really just a raised and squared-off cover made of sheet metal. It ran the width of the cab and appeared to be a structural part of the floor. I kept my double-barreled shotgun there, an ancient L. C. Smith 12-gauge with exposed hammers and double triggers. I had bought it from a hunting guide called Chombo. It was about sixty years old, and long too. I had sawed two inches off the barrels and the thing still looked like a goose gun.

I pulled it out and cocked both hammers and walked over to Dan and touched the muzzle lightly to his belly at the parting of his vest. His flesh jumped in a little spasm from the hot metal.

"No, I guess not. No beer today, Dan. This was all I could find."

"No need to get heavy, man. Have we offended you in some way?"

"Heavee," said Beany Girl.

I asked for some identification. Dan said he had none, that he never carried anything on his person.

"Maybe you ought to start. Where are your tourist papers?"

"Gone. Stolen. We got ripped off bad at the beach last night. We were supposed to meet someone at Progreso but he didn't show up. We had all our stuff in plastic bags. That's what we're doing here, man. I thought we could find some useful things here at the dump but this is the worst-looking trash I ever saw."

I took his stick and pointed to a spot. "I want all of you to drop the rocks and sit on the ground, right there, back to back. No, better not say anything. Just do it."

Beany Girl had more spirit than Dan and she held back. She was just a little slow to comply and I had to whack her across the neck with the knobby stick. The blow came as a surprise. It stung and was effective. She was lucky I didn't knock her brains out. A grown woman, squatting down like that in front of everybody. There was no *mingitorio* out here, naturally, but any decent woman would have gone behind a bush. Dan was picking and pulling at his beard. I had to pop him one too, on the arm. "Get your hand down and keep it down. Nobody talks and nobody moves a finger unless I say so. You got that?"

When I had them all seated and arranged to suit me I searched the car. There were no papers. I walked

around the car breaking glass, punching at the cracked places with the stick. I smashed the headlights too. Then I propped one end of the stick against a wheel and broke it with my foot and flung the pieces away. Dan took that hardest of all. "My staff," he said. I raised the hood and ripped out all the spark-plug wires.

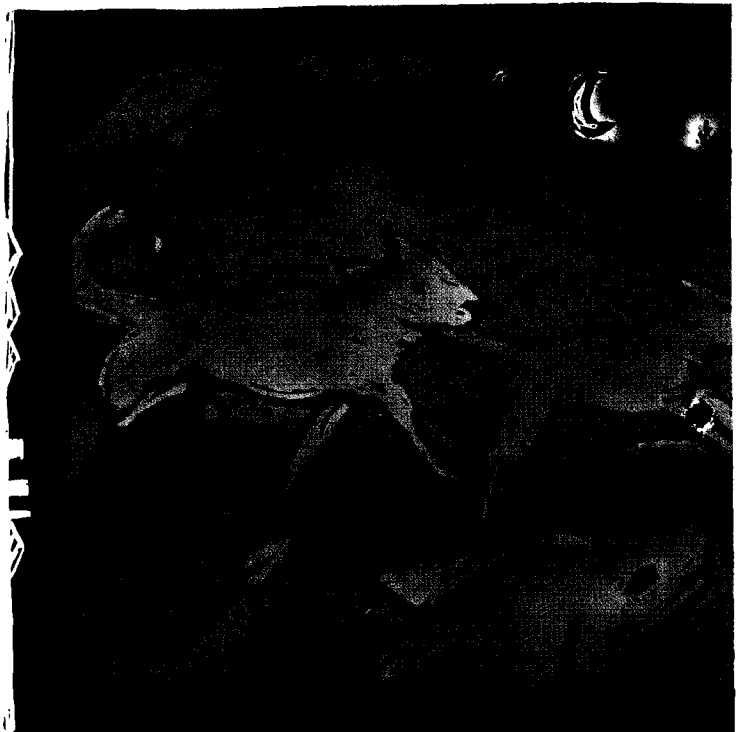
Something moved in the brush. I thought one of the hippies had slipped away. Even at rest these Jumping Jacks were hard to count. I wouldn't let them talk but I think they must have set up a high-frequency hum to interfere with my head. When I reached the fourth or fifth one in my tally I became confused and had to start over again. But no, it was only the goat. He had come back, a curious fellow, bearing the load of sins well. He munched on a mouthful of briars and watched us with sleepy eyes.

I climbed into the truck with my shotgun and my handful of cables. Three of them were Packard-Delco wires that didn't belong on a Ford. I started the engine and almost at once the oil-pressure needle moved. The pump had picked up the oil.

Dan said, "You got us wrong, man. No need for all this. You're not following the correct path."

Blood was roaring in my ears. I had to get away from these people before I did something. I could hardly trust myself to speak. "Don't let me catch you around this truck again," I said.

I still wasn't thinking straight. You let people annoy you and forget your own best interests. It wasn't until late afternoon that I thought about checking to see if Dan was listed on one of Gilbert's blue sheets. I had



missed a bet there. Gilbert ran a location service, nominally in El Paso but really out of an office in Mexico City, where these blue sheets came from, giving a rundown on Americans thought to be hiding in Mexico. I did a little work for him now and then, when I felt like it, just enough these days to get the monthly bulletins, blue papers stamped all over in red, *Confidential*, and *Agency Use Only*, and *Not For Circulation in U.S.*, and *All Rights Reserved, Gilbert Moss*. Locate one of these fugitives for Gilbert and you were paid 40 percent of the posted fee. Bring the bird in yourself and you got 75 percent. Mostly they were runaway kids, alimony dodgers, and the like, with a few tax evaders and swindlers and embezzlers, victims of surprise audits, and a very few violent criminals, but only those with substantial rewards on their heads. Gilbert was running a business and not a justice agency. The violent ones gave too much trouble.

I got my stack of blue sheets out of the closet and sat on the bed and went through them, starting with the latest ones. Dan may have been in there somewhere but I lost interest in him when I came across a photograph of little Red. I knew I had seen that face. Her name was LaJoye Mishell Teeter and she was from Perry, Florida. A runaway. The picture was a poor one, poorly Xeroxed from a poor reproduction of the missing-persons column in *The War Cry*, the Salvation Army magazine. But there was no mistaking that rabbit face. The offered fee was \$2,000, which meant \$1,500 for me if and when I delivered her.

No time to lose. Back to the dump. I would bring Dan in and get the Judicial Police here, the federal po-

lice, to hold him on a turpitude charge, if not for kidnapping, while I checked him out with Gilbert by telephone. The girl was clearly under age.

I was too late. The Jumping Jacks were gone in their Country Squire wagon, shattered windshield and all. They were resourceful, I had to admit that. The two cue balls must have stolen some more plug wires, eight of them this time, plus a coil wire, and maybe a couple of headlights too or they would truly be stumbling in darkness tonight. Dan had mentioned the beach. I drove to Progreso and cruised up and down the beachfront. Nothing doing. I should have burned that car up while I was at it.

ONE NIGHT IN SHREVEPORT I OVERHEARD A MAN trying to pick up a waitress in a bar. She asked him what he did for a living. He hesitated, then said, "I work out of my car." I thought he would have done better to lie, or even to confess to whatever it was he did out of his car, however awful, rather than to say that. I smiled over my drink in my superior way.

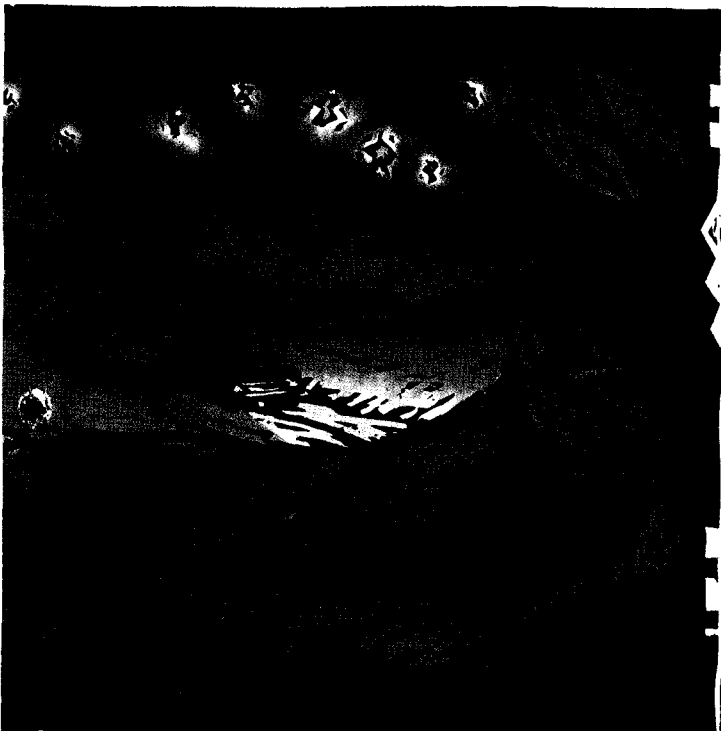
Now here I was years later, working out of my car, not smiling so much, and at a loss to say just what it was I did, out of my car. My truck rather. Light hauling, odd jobs. No more digging runs. I missed them too and I hadn't thought I would.

Two days after Christmas I was off for Chiapas with a load of mixed cargo. The long telephone message had come from the Bonar College people, who were camped out down there on a riverbank, mapping a Mayan ruin called Ektún. Dr. Ritchie or one of his people had called my hotel from the Palenque bus station, the nearest telephone, and given Beatriz a shopping list of things they needed.

I had everything but the *embrague por la Toyota*—a Toyota clutch. That was the Spanish word for it all right, but in Mexico, where so many automotive terms had become Americanized, it was generally called a *cloche*. What kind of Toyota? Car? Truck? What year model? Did they want an entire clutch assembly? They didn't say or Beatriz didn't bother to take it down. Refugio and I had helped them carry their stuff in and I couldn't remember seeing a Toyota.

Probably they had fried the disc pulling down trees and dragging blocks of stone around. But I wasn't going to buy one and go through the agony of trying to return it. As a rule you get value for your money in Mexico, but it's hard to get any of it back, to get a deposit returned or any sort of refund. In their financial dealings with gringos, the Mexicans employ a ball-check valve that permits money to flow in only one direction. It can't back up. Buy the wrong one and I would have to eat that clutch, throw-out bearing and all.

No *embrague* then, but I had everything else. Peanut butter they craved, and Ocoingo cheese and a sack of



potatoes and flashlight batteries and two small hydraulic jacks and canned milk and pick handles and 35-millimeter color slide film and bread and twenty-five gallons of gasoline and so on. I also had an old Servel gas refrigerator for Refugio. He had asked me to be on the lookout for one. It was too tall to transport upright—my camper shell was only cab high—so I stowed it sideways and hoped for the best.

Mérida, for all its associations with the Mayan empire, is not really very close to any of the major ruins, except for Uxmál and Kabah. Mayapán and Dzibalchaltun are nearby but they don't count for much, not as spectacles. I had a good 300-mile run ahead of me, south to Palenque on paved road, then another seventy miles or so of rough track through the woods. At Champotón, on the coast, I bought two buckets of fresh shrimp, one for Refugio and one for the college diggers. Refugio was crazy about shrimp.

I reached Palenque in the afternoon and worked the ruins there for an hour or so with my Polaroid camera, taking pictures of tourists at five dollars a shot. Hardly any business. The hippies, sunburnt and dazed, had no money and the older gringos had their own cameras. I left the Mexican tourists alone, lest I be reported. As a foreigner I wasn't legally permitted to do this sort of thing.

My friend Louise kept telling me the term "hippie" was out of date. She couldn't tell me why. These words come and go but why had that one been pulled? The hippies hadn't gone away. There were even some beatniks still hanging around here and there in Mexico, men my age, still thumping away on bongos with their eyes closed, still lying around in their pads, waiting for poems to come into their heads, and sometimes not waiting long enough. I did perhaps use "hippie" too loosely, to cover all shaggy young *Americano* vagabonds. Refugio called the real hippies *aves sin nidos*, birds without nests, and *los tóxicos*, the dopers. These were the real hippies, the *viciosos*, the hardened bums, kids gone feral. I knew the difference between them and the ordinary youngsters knocking around on the cheap with their backpacks.

They came now the year round to Palenque, which is everyone's idea of a lost city in the jungle—real hippies, false hippies, pyramid-power people, various cranks and mystics, hollow-earth people, flower children, and the Von Däniken people, such as Louise's husband, Rudy Kurle, with his space-invader theories. At night they sat on top of the pyramids in the moonlight. They were right to come here too, to see these amazing temples on a dark-green jungle hillside. The scholars say that Uxmál has the finest architecture, and of course there is nothing to touch Tikál for monumental ruins on the grand, Egyptian scale, but the hippies got it right instinctively. They knew Palenque was the jewel of Mayaland.

Between the ruins and the little town of Santo Domingo del Palenque there was a pasture where they camped out, these young travelers, with their vans and tents and ponchos. The rock music never let up. I stopped with my blue sheets to walk around the place and look them over. I peered in tents and car windows. I put my light in their faces. What drove them to herd up like this in open fields? Even as a kid, and a foolish one too, all too eager to please my pals, I couldn't see myself doing this.

It was getting dark. There was no one here I wanted. I gassed up at the intersection in town and headed farther inland, up the valley of the Usumacinta River. The road was paved for a mile or two and then became washboard gravel. It was so rough that you could drive for miles on a flat tire and not know it. This was the dry season, so called, and the archaeologists were stirring again. In my experience it just rained a little less at this time. Damp season would be more like it. There was no moon. It wasn't a night for pyramid roosting.

WHEN YOU SEE STEEL DRUMS YOU'RE GETTING close to Refugio's trading post and salvage yard. He counted his wealth in fifty-five-gallon drums. They lay scattered along the road and in the woods all around his place, rusting away and more or less empty, but still holding the residue of various acids, solvents, herbicides, pesticides, explosives, corrosives, all manner of petrochemical goo.

His people had heard me coming and were assembled outside to see who it was. The floodlight was on, dogs were barking. Small children jumped on my bumpers, front and back. A teenage boy named Manolo was waving his arms. This was Refugio's son. He wigwagged me in around the old tires and plastic pipes to an aircraft-carrier landing. The crowd parted to make way for Refugio—relatives, cronies, employees. He had the paunch of a *patrón* now but still he moved like a bowlegged and cocky little third baseman. The sleeves of his short-sleeve shirt hung well below his elbows. Around his thick neck he wore a Mayan necklace of tubular jade beads, with a heavy silver cross at the bottom.

"Jaime!"

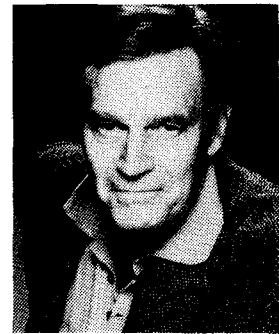
"Refugio!"

We went into an *abrazo* there under the floodlight, with bugs swirling around us.

First I got the gifts out of the way. Some *futbol*, or soccer, magazines for Manolo, and a three-speed hair dryer for Refugio's wife, Sula, and a box of iodized salt. She was afraid of getting a goiter, like her mother. Refugio dredged up half the shrimp from the bucket with his hands, and began shouting orders to Sula and the kitchen staff. This many *camarones* were to be

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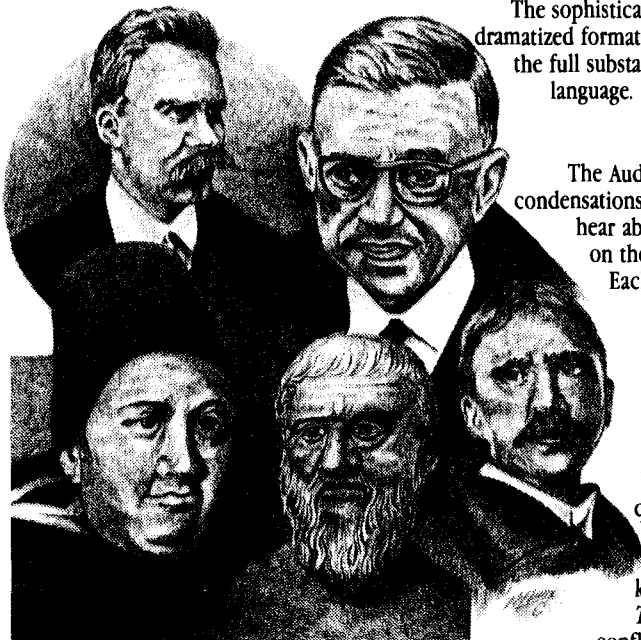
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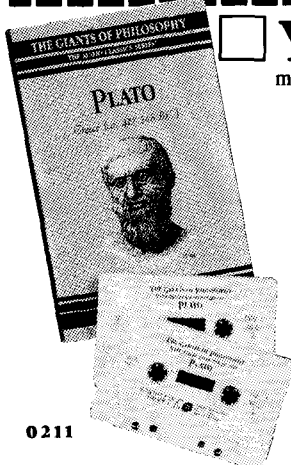
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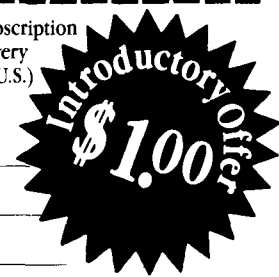
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boiled at once. Then peeled and chilled and served to him and him alone in a *cóctel grande*, with *mayonesa* and green sauce. The rest could be fried with garlic and served up with a lot of rice. That would do for the rest of us.

He shooed everyone away and we went to his office. It was like the waiting room of a cut-rate muffler shop, with an old brown plastic couch and some odd bits of automotive seating. Refugio sat at his desk, with Ramos at his feet, son of the late Chino, bravest dog in all Mexico. Refugio never would admit that old Chino tucked his tail when he heard thunder. I stretched out on the couch. Manolo brought me a cold bottle of Sidral, an apple-flavored drink, and a wet towel and a dry towel to refresh myself with. He showed me his Christmas present, which was a thirty-three-piece wrench set, all nicely chromed. Manolo had turned out to be a fine boy, from a brat. He was an only child and Sula couldn't bear to wean him until he was four years old. He was a biter. He bit his playmates and threw rocks at strangers until he was twelve. Now here he was, a fine young man of sixteen.

Refugio turned on the air-conditioner in my honor, though it wasn't very hot. The lights dimmed, as for an electrocution. It was only a small window unit but it put a strain on his generator.

"How is the bennee?" he asked me.

"Business is bad, Refugio. Life is hard for a gringo in the Republic these days. I'm selling hammocks on the street now."

"¡No! ¡Qué desgracia!" He laughed and drummed his hands on the desk. "And the Doctor?"

This was Doc Flandin, the Mayanist.

"I don't see him much anymore. He stays in his big house."

"His tobacco pipe is drawing well?"

"Oh yes."

Mexicans don't smoke pipes and they find them amusing.

"Still he throws his head back? So?"

"Not so much. He's not tossing his old white locks about these days."

"He works hard on his book, no?"

"So he says."

"It will be a hundred pages?"

"More like a thousand."

"No! This is one of your jokes!"

"I speak the truth. *Las mil y una*."

He laughed and pounded the desk again. "No! What a miracle! So many leaves! Who could ever read them all?"

Not me. I went along with Refugio on that. Short was good in a book.

Then he became solemn and said, "My name is in this book, you know. Refugio Bautista Osório. On many leaves."

"I know. Mine too. You and me and Chino. The Doctor will make us all famous."

I told him about the Servel refrigerator and how the jet had been changed to use propane gas. I had found it in the port town of Sisal and cleaned it up. He summoned Manolo and another boy and told them to unload it and connect it to his gas bottle and light the burner.

"¿Cuánto?" he asked me.

I wrote "\$150" on the palm of my hand and showed it to him.

"Ni modo." No way. He made a quick slicing move with one index finger across the other. Too much. Cut your price in half. But he was only playing around. When a price really upset him he called on Saint James and the Virgin both in a whisper.

My pricing policy was simple. I doubled my money and then rounded that figure off in my favor. This refrigerator had cost me around \$70, so my price was \$150. My terms were cash on delivery, payment in full, *no acepto cheques*.

Refugio took a thermometer from the drawer and held it up. "I will place this in the box and if the red line gets down to fifty in one hour, then we will talk about the value."

"There was no talk of fifty degrees before."

"Two hours. What can I do? You are my friend."

"All right. If you put that thing in the *congelador*." The freezing compartment, that is.

"Gringos are so hard."

He wanted to barter and first he offered me an old hospital bed that cranked up and down. Then he dragged a wooden box across the floor, a hand-grenade box with a rope loop at each end. It was there that he kept his *antigüedades*. He brought out a mirror, slightly concave, made of a wooden disc and shiny bits of hematite. Some Mayan queen had seen her face grow old in it.

"Worth more than two hundred."

"Yes, but not to me. I'm finished with that. No more relics. *Término*."

"That is what you say. Look. Fine orange ware." It was a ceramic cup.

"No, I'm serious."

Next a baroque pearl shaped something like a fish. Eyes and mouth and fins had been incised on it.

"No."

"And what do you say to this?"

At first I thought it was a piece of green obsidian and then I saw it was a carved lump of beautiful blue-green Olmec jade. The figure was a hunchbacked man with a baby face and a snarling jaguar mouth. Very old, even for Olmec. The nostril holes were conical. They had been drilled with wet sand and a pointed stick, rather than with the later, bird-bone, tubular drill. I had no feel for Olmec art—more pathology



than art—but I knew this weird little man was valuable. I knew a collector in St. Louis who would pay \$7,500 for this thing, maybe \$10,000. If a man wants something and you're any kind of salesman you'll make him pay for it.

I knew that Refugio knew it too, and would never trade it for an old icebox.

He said, "Green, see, the color of life. Dead rocks are brown."

"Where did you get this?"

"Who knows?"

"Tres Zapotes?"

"Who can say?"

"They make these things up at Taxco now, out of chrysolite and serpentine. On bench grinders."

"They don't make that one at Taxco. Look it over. *Impeccable*. If you can scratch it with your knife I give it to you."

"No, it's not bad. As a favor to a friend then. I'll trade you even."

"Ha! That is what you hope and pray to God for!"

What he wanted me to do was take a photograph of it and show the picture around in Mérida and New Orleans, put out some feelers. I had no intention of being a broker in the deal but I humored him and took a couple of shots with my 35-millimeter camera. He posed it beside the Sidral bottle to show the scale. The camera flash made him jump and laugh, as always.

Manolo reported that he couldn't get the Servel to do anything. I advised patience. The cooling to be gotten from a small flame and no moving parts was magical but slow. I reminded Refugio of his old kerosene refrigerator, which took three days to make mushy ice, if you didn't open the door. It was one of the earliest frost-free models.

"Turn it upside down for a bit, Manolo," I said. "Then try it again. Make sure it's level." I had heard somewhere that this headstand treatment did wonders for a balky gas refrigerator, though it seemed that any clots in the system would have been dislodged on the ride down.

Sula brought in the giant shrimp cocktail. The *camarones* were piled high in a soup bowl. Refugio squeezed limes over them and spooned mayonnaise and *salsa verde* on them. I asked him about the Ektún dig. What was all this about a Toyota clutch?

He threw up his hands. The subject disgusted him. He could no longer do business with those people. Dr. Ritchie was a good man, very amiable, but he was down with fever, and this new man, Skinner, who was running things now, was a person of no dignity, a monkey-head, a queer, and a rude animal, *una bestia brusca*. On and on he went. The woman who gave birth to Skinner was no woman at all but an old sow monkey, and his brother, if he had one, was worse than he was, certainly not a man of honor.

What Skinner had done, I gathered, was to insist that Refugio provide detailed price breakdowns on his goods and services, in such an offensive way as to suggest that Refugio was a crook. Nor would the man buy any steel drums or plastic pipe. And he had brought his own rope from the States! To Mexico, the home of rope!

"I can get his *cloche* in Villahermosa. One day and it's there. I can find anything he wants and Manolo can repair anything he can break but how can I do business with a monkey? No, I will never go back while that monkey-head is there."

And a good thing, said Sula, because Ektún was no place for people to linger around at night. For her part

she was glad that he and Manolo had stopped going there. So many demons were lurking around those old *templos*, not to mention the *chaneques*, a race of evil dwarfs who lived in the deep *selva*. When you came upon these horrible little men in a clearing they would point at you and jeer, making indecent noises, and they danced about all the time so you couldn't count them. They hated above all things to be counted. Sometimes they stole chickens.

Refugio was squeezing limes with both hands. "*¿Tú qué sabes!*" he said to her. "What do you know? The *chaneques* don't really bother people very much, and as for the demons, all the world knows that they never show themselves in the light of day! At night, well, their powers are stronger, yes, in the hours of darkness they have certain powers, but not strong enough to interfere with a Christian! Not even with one of God's poorest servants! You know nothing of these things!"

All the same, she said, and be that as it may, Ektún was a place of evil gloom, and so was Yaxchilán, and Piedras Negras too, come to that, all those old abandoned cities of the *antiguos* along the riverbanks, and you couldn't pay her enough money to sleep for one night around those old stones.

Sula was Mayan herself, of the Chontal group, with heavy-lidded eyes and hook nose and receding chin. I had seen her face on a mossy stela at the Copán ruin, carved in stone a thousand years ago. She was one of the few Indians I had ever heard express strong feelings about such matters. The ones I knew—uprooted city dwellers for the most part, admittedly—showed little interest in the monuments of their ancestors. They neither feared nor venerated the *templos* of the old ones.

The Servel didn't make it to 50° at the given time, or even to 55°, but the door gasket was bad, I pointed out, and once Manolo had replaced it the box would surely do the job. It would last for years too. Refugio wrote "\$75" on his palm and showed it to me.

"That wouldn't even pay for my gasoline."

But I gave in and settled for a hundred. He agreed it was a good buy.

We stayed up late in the office talking about the old days, and one thing and another. Refugio fed tidbits to Ramos. He asked me to be on the lookout for a Tecumseh gasoline engine with a horizontal shaft, of about eight horsepower, and some of those little German cigarette-rolling machines that you used to be able to find in Veracruz. He asked me if I thought he needed one of those new water beds.

"No."

Motorized golf cart?

"No."

Food blender?

"Yes, to make *licuados*." Milkshakes.

Trash compactor?

"No." It would take one the size of a house to compact his trash.

He showed me an advertisement for elevator shoes in an American magazine. Could I get him a pair? One of the shoes was pictured, a brown loafer, which promised to give you an invisible three-inch lift above your fellow men.

"Three inches," he said. "How much?"

I showed him with thumb and finger. "Like that. About eight centimeters."

He studied the deceptive shoe with a dreamy smile. Three inches was a little more than he had thought.

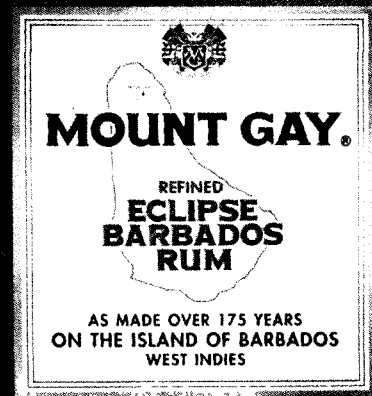
I SLEPT ON THE COUCH AND WAS OFF EARLY. I HAD breakfast as I drove. Sula had left me a sack of hard-boiled eggs, already peeled, and four buttered slices of Bimbo bread, some salt in a twist of paper, and a single *habanero* pepper pod, the world's hottest. Bimbo is like Wonder bread. I had told her many times that I preferred corn tortillas but she took that to be a polite gesture or an affectation. She knew the *yanquis* liked their bread finely spun from bleached wheat flour. Sula felt sorry for me because I had no wife to look after me.

The washboard gravel ended just beyond Refugio's place. No more maintenance. From here on the road was just a rough slash across the hilly Chiapas rain forest. The drive had once been a shady one all the way, under the jungle canopy. Now there were cleared pastures with stumps where cattle ranchers had moved in. I met a log truck and saw a Pemex crew at work with their seismic gear, sounding the earth for pockets of oil. Here and there I passed a hut made of sticks and thatch, where a solitary farmer had squatted. This was his *finca*. It was more like camping out than farming.

The road at this time ended at the ruins of Bonampak, of the famous wall paintings, but I wasn't going that far. To reach Ektún and the Tabí River you turned off to the left, or east, on a still more primitive track. I did so and the trees closed in on me. Limbs whacked against my windows. I moved forward at a creep but even so my poor truck was twisted and jolted about, by rocks and bony roots. The glove-compartment door flew open. Screws were backing out of their holes and nuts off their bolts. I had to hold my hand on the gearstick to keep it from popping out of gear. I saw a wild pig, a black squirrel as big as a house cat, darting green parrots. You don't expect parrots to be accomplished fliers but they go like bullets.

I saw nothing human until I reached the fording place on the Tabí. There was a flash of yellow through the foliage. As I turned the bend I made out a car stranded at midstream. It was a bright yellow Checker Marathon, towing a pop-top tent trailer. The trailer had been knocked sideways by the current.

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National Public Radio® News

Rudy Kurle. What was he doing out here? No use asking. How did he get this far in that rig? I honked my horn.

He was in the back seat, where he must have been asleep. He stuck his head out the window and shouted. "Hey, Burns! Great! This is great! Did you copy my Mayday?"

"What? No!" I could barely hear him over the rush of water.

"I need a jump start!"

He needed more than that.

He had been sitting there all night, dead in the water, trying to start the thing and calling for help on his CB radio, on one channel after another, until he had run his battery down. His DieHard had done died. I seldom turned on my own CB and in any case there were no signals to pick up out here. The water was about knee deep, but with deeper potholes. He had dropped his right front wheel into one of these. I drove around him and positioned my truck on the hard ground of the opposite bank. I pieced together a chain, a nylon rope, and a nylon tow-strap.

Rudy wouldn't get out of the car to help. The water was too rough or he didn't want to get his lace-up explorer boots wet, something. Useless to ask why. Usually he wasn't such a delicate traveler. How long would he have sat there? The river was a tributary of the Usumacinta, tea-colored from dead leaves, only moderately swift at this time of year, and only about sixty feet wide at this ford. A bit more maybe. I'm a poor judge of distance over water.

I went out into the stream with my towline, jumping from rock to rock. Another of man's farcical attempts at flight. We keep trying but none of us, not even the high-jumper slithering backward over his crossbar, ever gets very far off the earth. And yet we come down hard. My bad knee gave way on one of these landings and I went headfirst into the water and tumbled a ways downstream. It didn't matter, getting soaked, as I had to bob all the way under anyway to hook the strap to a frame member.

All the while Rudy was making suggestions. "No, no," I said. "Listen to me. Put it in neutral and just keep the wheels straight. Don't do anything else. Stay off the brakes. Stop talking."

First the chain came loose from my trailer ball, and then the nylon rope, twanging like a banjo string, snapped. The line parted, as the sailors say. Pound for pound stronger than steel! Such is the claim made for these wonder fibers, but I'll take steel. Third time lucky. I removed some rocks in front of his tires and then, in low-range four-wheel drive, in *doble tracción*, I yanked him loose and got him up on the bank, trailer and all, without stopping.

Rudy didn't thank me but he did offer me some food. He had brown cans of meat and crackers he had

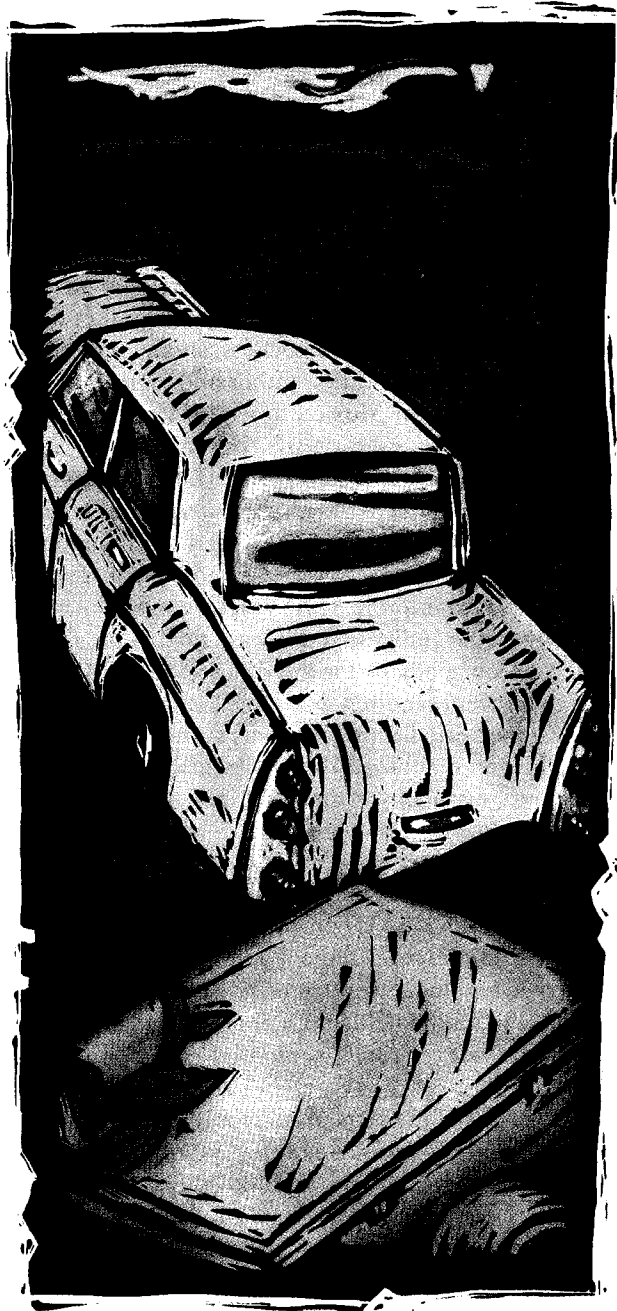
taken from his National Guard unit in Pennsylvania. All I wanted was a long pull on my water jug. I checked my tires for rock cuts. Wet rubber is easily sliced. Rudy showed me a nick in his bumper. "That's what your strap did." The bumper was decorated in the style of big Mexican trucks, with his road name, "The Special K," painted on it. That was his CB handle.

He said, "Wait a minute. Who told you I was going to Tumbalá anyway?"

"It was all over town when I left. There must have been something in the papers."

"Louise told you. Everybody wants to stick his nose into my business."

"Nobody told me. I'm not going to Tumbalá."



He thought that over as he spread meat paste on a survival cracker with his commando knife. "Well, it's funny, you coming along like this, right behind me."

"Yes, except I'm going to Ektún. This is not the road to Tumbalá."

"Your map says it is."

My map! He showed me. Yes, I remembered now. A month or so ago I had told him about this Tumbalá, a minor ruin on the Usumacinta, with curious miniature temples. They were small stone houses, built as though for people two or three feet high. Rudy was excited. This was his meat, tiny houses. Little rooms! An old logging road led to the place, no longer passable, even in four-wheel drive, but you could follow it on foot easily enough. Quite a long hike, however. I had explained this to him and sketched out a rough map.

"No, you came too far, Rudy. You didn't turn soon enough."

"Your map is not drawn to scale."

"Of course not. It's just a simple diagram. But it's easy enough to see where to turn off. You can't drive to Tumbalá anyway. I told you that."

"I was going as far as I could and then set up base camp."

He wore a bush hat with the brim turned up on one side, Australian fashion, and a belted safari jacket with epaulets, rings, and pleated pockets, and he wanted to be known as "Rudy Kurle, author and lecturer." He and Louise were in Mexico to gather material for a book about some space dwarfs, or "manikins," who came here many years ago from a faraway planet. There was no connection with the *chaneques*, as far as I knew. Rudy's little men were benign, with superior skills and knowledge, and they had transformed a tribe of savages into the Mayan civilization. Not very flattering to the Indians, and it wasn't of course a new theory, except perhaps for the dwarf element. There had been recent landings as well.

As a geocentric I didn't find this stuff convincing. I knew the argument—all those galaxies!—a statistical argument, but in my cosmology men were here on earth and nowhere else, go as far as you like. There was us and the spirit world and that was it. It was a visceral belief or feeling so unshakable that I didn't even bother to defend it. When others laughed at me, I laughed with them. Still, the flying-saucer books were fun to read and there weren't nearly enough of them to suit me. I liked the belligerent ones best, that took no crap off the science establishment.

Rudy was often gone on these mysterious field trips, to check out reports of ancient television receivers, pre-Columbian Oldsmobiles, stone carvings of barefooted astronauts strapped into their spaceships. The ships were driven by "photon propulsion," although here in the jungle the manikins went about their errands in other, smaller, "slow aircraft." Rudy

wouldn't describe the machines for me. He and Louise tried to draw people out without giving anything away themselves. There were thieves around who would steal your ideas and jump into print ahead of you. So much uncertainty in their work.

And so little fellowship among the writers. They shared a beleaguered faith and they stole freely from one another—the recycling of material was such that their books were all pretty much the same one now, but in private they seldom had a good word for their colleagues. There were usually a few of these people in temporary residence in Mérida. They exchanged stiff nods on the street. Rudy even expressed contempt for Erich von Däniken, his master, who had started the whole business, and for lesser writers too, for anyone whose level of credulity did not exactly match his own. A millimeter off, either way, and you were a fool. It was the scorn of one crank for another crank.

We dried off the contact points and the distributor cap and with a jump from my battery we got the Checker running again. The engine was a Chevrolet straight six, the old stovebolt six, very reliable but looking skinny and forlorn in that big engine bay. To help control this beast on the road Rudy wore soft-leather driving gloves perforated with many tiny holes. Inside the car there was a clutter of boxes, jugs, blankets, gourds, magazines, rocks, books—and a big scrapbook of newspaper clippings, telling of saucer landings in Russia and Brazil, near towns that could not be found in any atlas.

HE FOLLOWED ME ON TO EKTÚN. EXPLORATION by taxicab. He took that old Checker into places where few others would have ventured. Rudy was serious about his work. In the bars and cafés of Mérida I had heard anthropologists laughing at him, young hotshots who never left town themselves, or who went out for a night or two and then scurried back.

We left the river for a bit and then came back to it downstream at the ruin site. Three pyramids of middling size, partly cleared, and a camp of red and blue tents. A canvas water bag hanging from a limb. A sagging grid of strings laid across the plaza. The Bonar College people stopped work and looked at us. No word of greeting. We came from the outer world bringing good things and this was our welcome. No more joy here. The dig was falling apart. I had seen it all before.

Sula was right about the demons. The place was infested with them, many thousands of whom had taken the form of mosquitoes. They swarmed in my face as I got down from the truck and walked shin-deep in ground fog. It was cemetery fog from a vampire mov-

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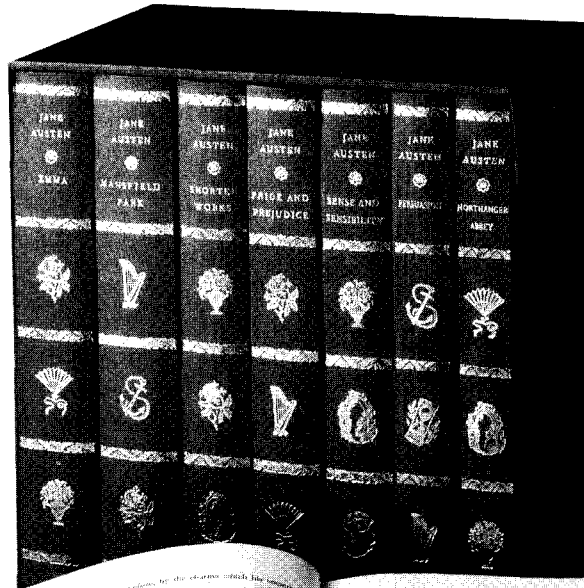
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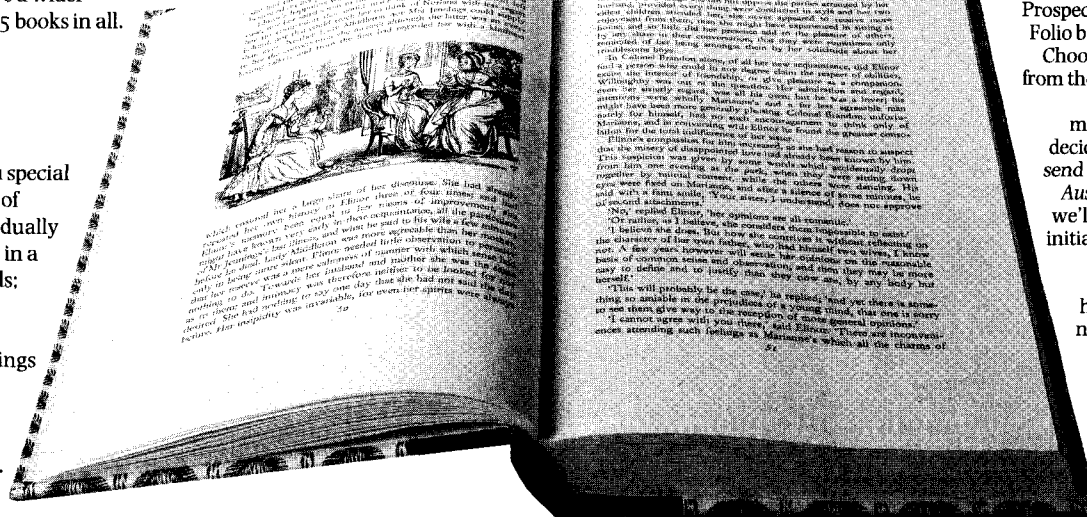
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ie. A mockingbird perched on my bumper and pecked at the smashed bugs. Up high in the trees the howler monkeys were screaming. Our clattering arrival had set them off. It was like cries of agony from cats. You couldn't see them.

I took a bar of yellow laundry soap and went back into the river in my wet clothes. This was a little trick I had picked up years ago in Korea with the First Marine Division. You immerse yourself fully clad and have a bath and wash your clothes at the same time. Then you change into your dry dungarees, all rolled up and resting in your pack. Let dirty clothes rest for a while and they are almost as fresh as clean clothes. A bit stiffer, and the black glaze is still on the collar. There are tigers in Korea but I never saw one. Nor had I ever caught a glimpse of a jaguar here in the Petén forest. Pumas, ocelots, margays, but not one *tigre*.

I went along to Dr. Henry Ritchie's tent and found him half asleep on a cot, behind a mosquito bar. His clothes were soaked with sweat. His breath came hard. A real gentleman, a good man, as Refugio said, and I always felt a little shame in his presence. Few *arqueos* had that effect on me. He knew my background but was always friendly. After all, as Doc Flandin said, permit or no permit, we all lived and worked by the same words, namely, *There is nothing hid but it shall be opened*.

In a minute or so he saw me sitting there on the stool. He gave me his trembling hand. It was cold. "Jimmy. You're here."

"Just now. I was out of town when your message came or I would have been here sooner. I hear you've been ailing."

"Oh, I've been through this before. Not quite so bad maybe. I can't keep anything down. Did you have a nice Christmas?"

"Very nice, thank you. I brought you some long cigars and a bucket of shrimp."

"Wonderful."

"Why don't I run you in to Villahermosa? I can have you there in the clinic tonight. That's where you belong. No use in punishing yourself."

"I don't know. Maybe tomorrow, if I'm no better. Can you stay over?"

"Sure. We can be off first thing in the morning. You can lie down in the back."

A man came barging through the flap and took off his dust mask.

"You're Burns?"

"Right."

"I'm Eugene Skinner. You should have reported to me first."

This was Skinner, the ape in a shirt. He was a nervous man, about my age, with kinky auburn hair, nappy hair, which must have suggested the monkey to Refugio. It reminded me more of a Duroc hog.



Then Rudy came in and wanted to know if he was at Tumbalá.

Skinner said, "No, my boy, this is Ektún. Which is to say, Dark Stone, or Black Stone. Who are you?"

I introduced him as a friend and a reporter.

Dr. Ritchie said, "Jimmy brought us some fresh shrimp, Gene."

"That's fine. How about the clutch?"

"I didn't bring one."

"They didn't have one in Mérida?"

"I don't know. You didn't tell me what model it was for."

"He doesn't know. We need a clutch and he brings shrimp."

"What's it doing? Why don't we take a look at it?"

"It won't do any good to look at it."

He barged out again. I followed him and grabbed his arm. "Why haven't you taken Dr. Ritchie out of here? He's in bad shape."

"How? On a motorbike? If you and your pal Bautista had done your job I would have some transportation here."

The expedition had begun with a respectable little motor pool, now reduced to a single motorcycle, owned by a young graduate student named Burt. The International Travelall was down with a broken axle. The Nissan pickup was in a Villahermosa garage with a blown head gasket. Becker had returned to Chicago in his new Jeep Wagoneer, with a female student who had fallen ill. I was surprised to hear that Becker had bailed out. He who was so eager to get at it. He was a young rich man, a graduate of Bonar College, and a



dabbler in archaeology. Becker was financing the dig. I think he must have seen himself as Schliemann at Hisarlik, or Lord Carnarvon at King Tut's tomb. Camp life didn't suit him, however, and when no treasures were turned up in a week's time he went home, back to the trading pit of the Chicago commodities market, where things moved faster.

It might have been the digging itself. A man who has never dug a ditch or a well or a deep grave, as distinguished from the shallow grave of crime news, has no notion of the work required to move even a moderate amount of rocks and dirt about, in an orderly way, with hand tools. At this remote site there were no cheap labor gangs, only a few Lacondón Indians, and the professors and students had to do most of the work themselves. Becker must have looked at his little pile of dirt, his spoil, then seen how much remained to be removed before he could get down to work with the dental pick and the tweezers and the camel's-hair brush. He despaired. It may have come to him in the night: *I am only Becker at Ektún.*

The Toyota pickup belonged to Skinner. He had driven down alone from Illinois, arriving a few days after the main party. The problem was that you couldn't disengage the clutch. Pressing the pedal did nothing. The flywheel of the engine was locked up to the driveline. I did what I called taking a look at it. Burt and I lay on our backs and examined the linkage and pooled our ignorance. It was alien to me. Some sort of Nipponese hydraulic booster up there, a slave cylinder. The only clutches I knew had a straight mechanical linkage. What I needed here was Manolo and his

thirty-three wrenches. I was only a shade-tree mechanic, and an impatient one at that. Get a bigger hammer, or put a bigger fuse in and see if anything smokes. That was my approach.

I decided on a show of violence. Burt and I got the truck going in the lowest forward gear and I drove around and around the clearing, poking the gas pedal for a lurch effect, and pumping on the clutch pedal, hoping to pop something loose. It worked, to everyone's surprise. The clutch disc had stuck to the flywheel with rust or some fungoid rot and was now free again.

Skinner had been chasing after us, shouting and waving his arms. We were abusing his truck. Now he was doubly annoyed. All the to-do had ended with a quick fix and he had made a spectacle of himself before his crew. He was a fat lady running after a bus.

Then he tried to beat me down on my prices. He went over the list, muttering, going into little fake body collapses. As the hated profiteering middleman, I had seen this show before.

"You must think you've got a gold mine here, Burns."

"If it's such a gold mine then why can't you find anyone else to do it? What about the wear and tear on my truck? My prices are not out of line. I'm not even charging you for the clutch repair."

"Am I supposed to be grateful? It's not as though you actually did anything. I'm not even sure it's fixed. You and Bautista may be able to take advantage of Henry but you're dealing with me now."

"You called me, I didn't call you."

"And this famous bucket of shrimp. I can't find the price listed. Where have you hidden it?"

"I was throwing it in free, as lagniappe, but now I want thirty dollars for it, and I want it now. I'm not going to stand here and haggle with you, Skinner. Pay me now or everything goes back. Nothing comes off that truck until I get my money."

A bearded engineer named Lund interceded. He took Skinner away to calm him down. In the end they paid. Lund paid me. It was all Becker's money anyway.

Some truckers refuse to lift things but I wasn't proud in that way. We unloaded the goods and stowed them in the "secure room," which was a stone chamber in Structure II-A. Wonderful dead names these *arqueos* have for their pyramids. The entrance could be closed off with a ramshackle door made of poles, and locked with a chain. Here the food was stored, and the more valuable pieces of equipment, and the finds, running largely to fragments of monochrome pottery. There were beads and other knickknacks sealed in clear plastic bags, and some chunks of organic matter—wood and charcoal—wrapped in aluminum foil, for carbon-14 dating. I saw nothing worth locking up.

Pots put me to sleep. The romance of broken crockery was lost on me.

Great care would be taken here, every last pebble tagged. Then the loot would be sacked up and hauled away and dumped in the basement of some museum, where tons of the stuff already lay moldering. Buried again, so to speak, uncatalogued, soon forgotten, never again to see the light of day. But the great object would have been achieved, which was to keep these art works out of the hands of people. Don't let them touch a thing! A sin! A crime against "the people"! By which they meant the state, or really, just themselves. At least Refugio and I had put these things back into the hands of people who took delight in them, if not "the people." We gave these pieces life again. Sometimes I thought there weren't enough of us doing this work. That was the way I put it to myself. I stole nothing. It was treasure trove, lost property, abandoned property, the true owners long dead, and the law out here was finders keepers. That was the best face I could put on it.

Rudy set up his tent camper, not bothering to ask permission. He sat on the black boulder for which the place was named and spoke into his tape recorder. "An extremely short astroport oriented from northeast to southwest," I heard him say. He stopped speaking as I approached but was in no way embarrassed.

"A word to the wise, Rudy."

"What?"

"Make yourself useful around camp and they may let you stay. They're short-handed. But don't make a lot of suggestions. Stay out of their hair."

"I know how to behave myself. How far is it to the big river?"

"Not far. Just remember, you're a guest here." I walked out into the woods about a hundred yards, where there was an oblong structure standing alone, a *temescal*, a Mayan steam bath. Refugio and Flaco Peralta and I had punched a hole in the floor of this house years ago. We found nothing. Actually I lost something, my Zippo lighter, smoothest of artifacts, which rode a little heavy in the pocket. Some *arqueo* might turn it up in a hundred years, and with acid and a strong light bring up the inscription—*Champion Spark Plugs*. I noticed that the carved panel above the door had been cut away with a chain saw. You could see the tooth marks in the stone. As soon as I got out of the business people started buying everything. Slabs of stone.

There was a beating of wings. A flight of bats came pouring out of the doorway in panic, right into my face. No, they were birds. Swifts. Well named. They nested here but their life was in the air. They ate, drank, bathed, played, and even mated on the wing, if that can be believed. This aerial life was what the hippies were after. I had tried for it too, perhaps, in my

own way, but with me it was all a bust. I never got off the ground. I peered inside and saw that our pitiful hole was almost filled again with debris and guano. We had dug for treasure in a steam room, fools that we were.

Back at the clearing Skinner was in another rage. "Who keeps moving this?" he said. It was a drafting table. No one confessed. I watched the excavation work at the base of Structure I. Burt was in charge of the job. His people had cut a ragged opening in the side of the thing, such as I had never seen made by professionals. It was a bomb crater. They had broken through the limestone facing and were now into the rubble filler. They were going for the heart.

Mapping then, fine, and a certain amount of poking about and collecting of surface finds, nobody could object to that, certainly not me, but were they really authorized to make such a breach? I suspected them of exceeding the terms of their permit.

"Just a probe," Burt said. "We're going to put it back the way it was."

Some probe. I wondered if Dr. Ritchie knew about this. Well, it was no business of mine. I was in no position to object. Refugio and I would have used a backhoe if we could have gotten one into the woods. And they weren't going to find anything, just more rubble, perhaps the wall of a smaller, earlier pyramid. They had started too high above the base and they didn't have the labor or the equipment to do the job right.

THAT NIGHT THERE WAS SHRIMP AGAIN, WITH onions and peppers and potatoes in a makeshift *paella*. It was good and there was plenty of it. The mess tent was a blue nylon canopy with mosquito netting hanging down on all sides. We sat on folding chairs and ate off card tables, or rather Carta Blanca beer tables made of sheet metal. There were two hanging lights, powered by a generator. A little cedar bush had been decorated as a Christmas tree. An electric bug killer hung on a pole outside. Bugs flew to the blue light and were sizzled on a grid.

A bath in the river and a good meal had perked up the diggers. Even Skinner was in a good mood. He held up a floppy tortilla and said that corn didn't have enough gluten in it to make a dough that would rise. Still, heavy or not, the bread it made was good, and yet nobody seemed to know it outside Latin America and the southern United States. Corn, potatoes, tomatoes, yams, chocolate, vanilla—all these wonderful things the Indians had given us. Whereas we Europeans had been over here for 500 years and had yet to domesticate a single food plant from wild stock.

The two females left in camp were Gail and Denise, both a little plump, with their brown hair cut short, so that you could see the back of their necks, all

the way up to where the mowed stubble began. Gail was the quiet one. I took her for a mouse and I was wrong about that. She prepared a tray of food to take to Dr. Ritchie.

"No, no," Skinner said. "He's coming. He's up on his feet now. I just went over the work log with him. He'll be along."

Rudy asked if they used a cesium magnetometer in their work. I was uneasy. This had an extraterrestrial ring to me. But no, there was such a device, something like a mine detector, I gathered, for sensing underground anomalies, buried stelae and the like, and they did have one here, though it was down. High tech or low, almost everything here was down. I was proud of Rudy for knowing about the thing.

Dr. Ritchie came stumbling in and Gail got up to help him along.

Skinner said, "Here's our warlike Harry now. Look, there's a leaf on his shoe."

"Greetings, greetings. Anything left?"

Gail seated him across from me and took off his hat and served him. He was trying hard to be chipper. "Sure smells good. We're in your debt, Jimmy, for this fresh seafood."

"We can pull out tonight if you want to, sir. I can have you in the hospital by midnight. No use putting it off."

"Well, maybe tomorrow. I'm certainly no good to anybody like this. What do you think, Gene?"

Skinner shrugged. "Whatever you say. What's your



fee on a deal like that, Burns? Double rate on a hospital run?"

"For you it would be double."

Dr. Ritchie jiggled his soup spoon. "Boys, boys."

Lund picked up on the theme of Indian superiority. He talked about their natural ways, how they were attuned to the natural rhythms of life, their natural acceptance of things, natural religion, natural food, natural childbirth, natural sense of place in the world, natural this and natural that. All true enough, perhaps, but there was something a little bogus and second-hand about his enthusiasm. It was like some poet or intellectual going on and on about the beauties of baseball.

I lit a cigar and tuned out. We had the Indians to thank for tobacco too. They had given us these long green *puros* for solace. I watched the flashes of bugs being electrocuted. You couldn't hear the crackling sounds, or even the chugging of the generator, for the rushing noise of the river.

Skinner was soon at it again. "... an old and honored tradition, I know, this robbing of travelers in out-of-the-way places of the world, but I broke your pal Bautista from sucking eggs and I'm going to break you too."

"You've already broken me, Skinner. I'm cured. I won't be back."

"No, you don't get off that easy. You can't just turn this away. You'll be back. Guys like you are always hanging around where there's a quick buck to be made. You'll be back, but on my terms. Next time there'll be a clear understanding."

"We'll see."

I noticed that Dr. Ritchie's jaw had dropped. Flies were walking around on his lips and teeth. The flies know right away. The man was dead. He had just quietly stopped living. As a child I thought you had to go through something called a death agony, certain pangs and throes. They were not incidental but a positive visitation. Death came as a force in itself. We laid him on the ground and Gail gave him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Burt pounded on his chest. I turned him over and pitched in with my method, long out of date, of pumping up and down on his back. Lund said, "All right. That's enough."

AT BREAKFAST SKINNER ANNOUNCED THAT HE and Lund—the Mexicans might want a second witness—would take the body out in the Toyota. I was to follow behind in my big truck to see that they made it across the ford. The river was up a bit.

They would take the body to Villahermosa, the nearest town of any size, there to make the necessary calls home and to see to the legal formalities and the shipping arrangements. They would return in a day or two.

We lashed the body down in the bed of the Toyota so it wouldn't roll all about. Skinner said, "I really thought he just had the flu."

Rudy gave me a manila envelope to take back to Louise. It was all sealed up with tape. Today he was dressed in camouflage fatigues and a black beret with a brass badge on it. I couldn't believe the National Guard had ever issued that cap. From his web belt there hung canteens and other objects in canvas pouches.

"Rudy, I wouldn't wear that military stuff around here. Just down the way there, through all that greenery, is the Usumacinta River, and on the other side of the river is Guatemala."

"So?"

"You might get shot. They're shooting at each other over there, guerrillas and government troops. Sometimes there are skirmishes on this side of the river. A lone straggler in that outfit—you're just asking for it."

"With my blond hair they can see I'm a gringo."

"And maybe shoot you all the quicker for that."

"I can take care of myself. I've been out in the field before. You never give me credit for knowing how to do anything."

He was right. I liked Rudy but something about him aroused the bully and the scold in me.

"Look, Burns, don't worry, okay? I always have this stuff right here in my shirt pocket where I can get at it. I have my tourist visa and my car papers and my letter of introduction from Professor Camacho Puut. My press card is taped to my chest. I know how to get along with people. Nobody's going to bother me when they find out who I am."

"Who you are?"

"That I'm a writer. Down here they respect artists."

"Well, I wouldn't go wandering far in that rig. The Mexicans don't like it either."

"There's a ninety-minute cassette in that envelope. Keep it out of the heat. I've sealed it up in such a way that Louise will know if it's been tampered with."

"Okay."

"And don't tell anybody where I am. Just say I'm at—Chichén Itzá."

"Right. The sacred well."

"But don't make too much of it or they might suspect something. The best thing might be to—"

"Okay, okay. Just watch yourself out here. You're a long way from home, Rudy." □

These are early scenes from the novel, in which Jimmy Burns becomes more and more involved with the Kurles, Refugio, Dr. Flandin, chaneques, and The Jumping Jacks, not to mention the Night Dog, El Obispo, and the inseparable Munn brothers, Art and Mike. Gringos is to be published by Simon and Schuster in February.

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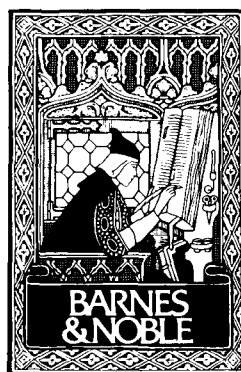
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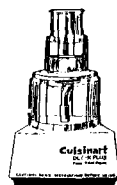
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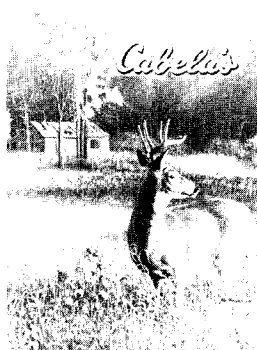
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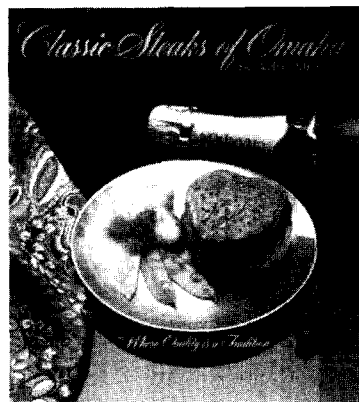
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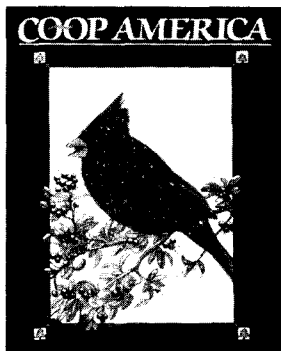
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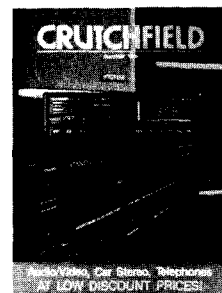
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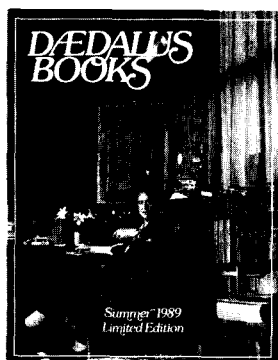
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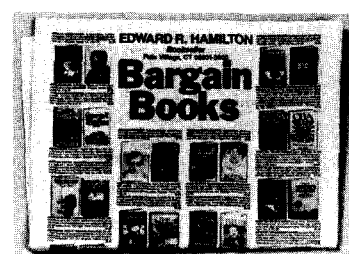


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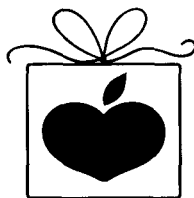
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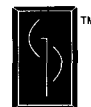
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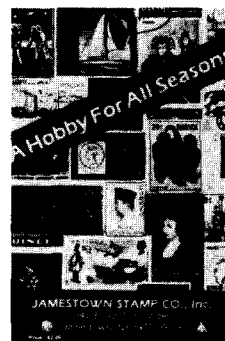
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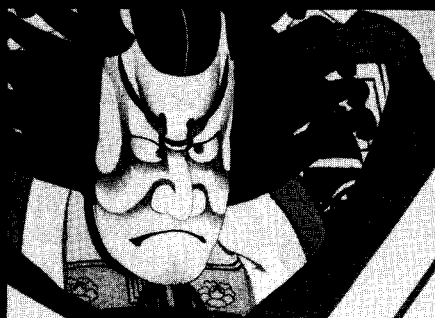
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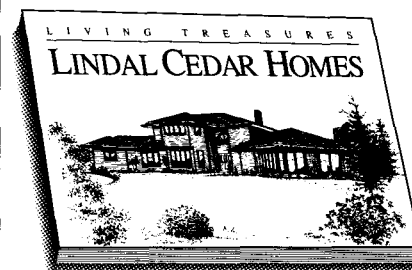


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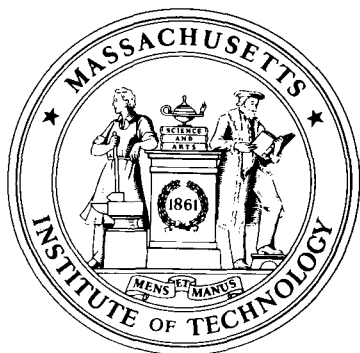
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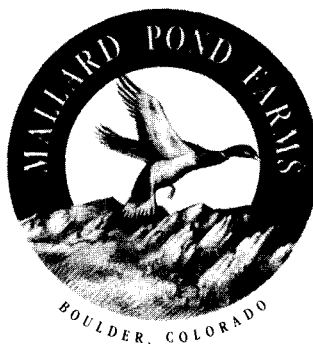
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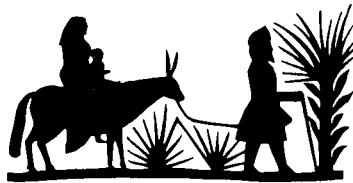


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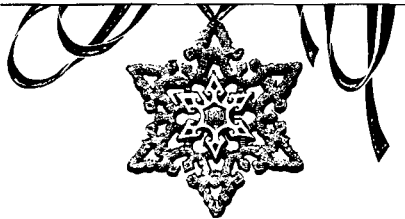


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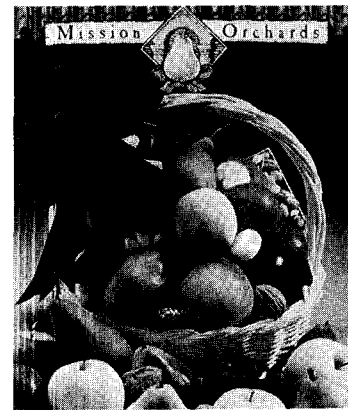
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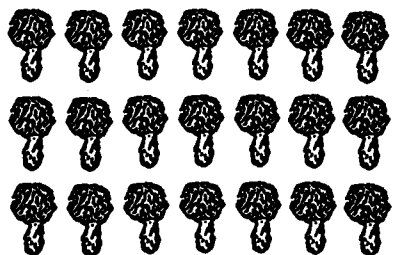
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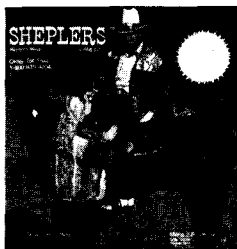
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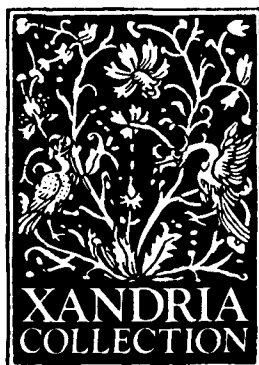
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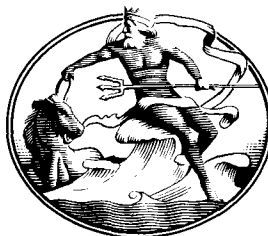
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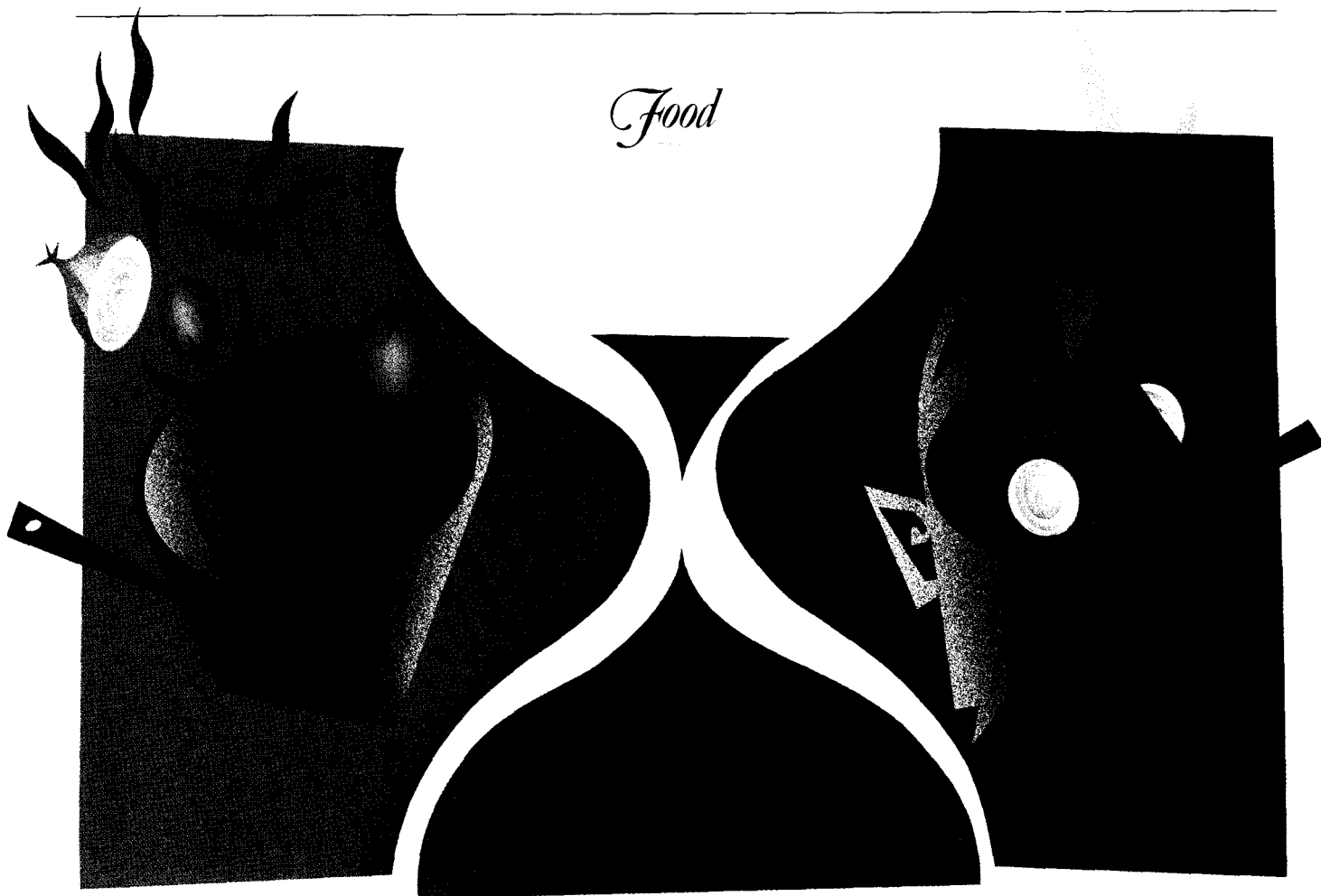
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An End to al Dente

Lightly cooked can be exactly the wrong way to taste vegetables

by Corby Kummer

ONCE SHOWED OFF to a group of Italians by serving a first course of fat fresh local asparagus I had bought at the Florence market. I peeled a very great number of them, and watched carefully once the water came to the boil lest they cook too long. After much anxious piercing with a knife I drained them at just the right moment and brought them forth. For a while there was concentrated, puzzled chewing. Then a young woman broke the silence. "But these are *raw*," she said.

I felt bad, both because my friends weren't impressed and because they couldn't appreciate the glory of a noble vegetable cooked to display its perfect freshness. Italians are simply used to overcooked vegetables, I thought with

some scorn—times have changed, and we know better.

I've since come to realize that out of rebellion against the gray and acrid "green" vegetables many of us were served in our youth we have come to value bright color over taste, and to think that the only acceptable texture for vegetables is somewhere between celery sticks and dowels. It's time to admit that some vegetables taste a lot better when they're more pliable, even if they're not a comic-book green. It's time to protest crudités served with the main course.

Of course, not all vegetables benefit from long cooking. The pioneers of nouvelle cuisine, with their mantra *tender-crisp*, did liberate us from soft and smelly brussels sprouts, for instance,

one of the least attractive overcooked vegetables. It does seem a very long time, though, since I've had a boiled potato that wasn't hard in the middle and gluey. Eggplant is delicious grilled, but it's terrible when tough and fibrous, which is how it always seems to be served. I'm also tired of chewing and chewing pretty carrots that are supposedly cooked. Visual appeal is crucial in making foods appetizing, especially vegetables. But they should taste like more than cellulose.

I NOMINATE TWO vegetables as the worst undercooked in the belief that color and texture are paramount: string beans and broccoli. String beans, which are more logically called green beans, since so few need

stringing anymore, don't have much taste when they're boiled for a few minutes and drained just after they turn a bright grass green. This is the way I have always cooked them, thinking that when their color is at its most intense their flavor must be too. I've had to season them heavily with salt and pepper, and to add lemon juice and oil too. And it has been work to eat them.

I was recently given pause when a friend from North Carolina, enlightened in culinary matters, became dreamy while recounting the pressure-cooked green beans of her youth. I felt queasy as she enthused over their flavor and the ease of cutting through them with a fork, thinking instead how brown and musty they surely tasted. A lot of fatback in the pot gave them what flavor they had, I reasoned. But then I remembered that every green bean I had ever been served in Italy was dark green and tender, and decided that perhaps rich European soil couldn't account for my fondness for them.

Like most people, I had always felt that flavor somehow fades with color. Harold McGee, the author of the essential *On Food and Cooking* and of a delightful new series of essays on science and cooking, *The Curious Cook*, to be published next month, set me straight. "The chemical reactions that flavor and color involve are distinct," he explained. "There's no necessary correlation between them." Chlorophyll, which gives vegetables their color, breaks down quickly. (And if you plunge green vegetables in ice water to stop the breakdown and keep the color bright, a common trick among chefs, you risk making the vegetables taste waterlogged.) But flavor compounds, he said, can take time to develop, and the compounds present after forty-five minutes of cooking can be very different from those at five, say, or twenty minutes.

But are they welcome flavor compounds? I telephoned Anna del Conte, a writer whom I greatly admire—she is the best historian of Italian food in either Italian or English, and has a highly developed sense for good food too. Her recently published *Italian Pantry* is full of everyday recipes that are easy

and unusual, and have the just-right simplicity of great home cooking. (The recipes are grouped by ingredients, which explains the title; they're full of fresh vegetables, fish, and meat.) She said that green beans are better long cooked, and that the real way to tell when they are done is not by color but by smell. "It's pervasive," she said.

"Don't you know it? My mother used to get up suddenly and say, 'Oh, the beans, they must be nearly done'—just the way you can smell a cake baking near the end." I couldn't conjure the smell, because I had for so long drained green beans before they began to release it.

That night I made a recipe that she called her favorite way of eating green beans (it's from an earlier book, unfortunately not available here). When the simple Tuscan stew, with onion, tomato, and crushed fennel seed, was done, I ate every bit of it, amazed that I was tasting Italy in my own house. Maybe it wasn't the soil. Maybe it was better to eat a green bean that hung in a curl when you lifted it instead of one that stayed stiff. Certainly these were succulent, an adjective I had never thought I'd use for green beans.

I've since made the recipe in a number of other ways, but find that Del Conte's method is best. Trim a pound of fresh green beans that have lively color and a firm, slightly furry surface. Bring two to four quarts of water to a boil. While the water is heating, separately chop one medium onion and four or five plum tomatoes (this should yield about a cup and a half of chopped tomato; you can substitute drained and chopped canned tomatoes). Crush a teaspoon of fennel seeds in a mortar and pestle, or with the end of a knife handle in a small bowl; the seeds need not be

ground to a powder, just broken into small pieces. Even if you have no fennel seed on hand, you'll still see the pleasures of long, slow cooking. Heat a film of olive oil in a wide sauté pan and sweat the onion for five minutes, until it turns translucent; it should not brown. When the water boils, add more salt than you usually would. "Beans take a tremendous amount of

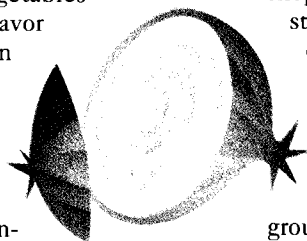
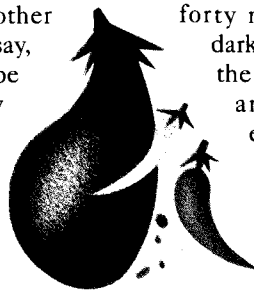
salt in the water, more than any other vegetable, more than pasta even," Del Conte says. Beans *are* often insipid; try two tablespoons of coarse salt. Boil the beans for four or five minutes, until they just begin to soften. Drain them and add them to the onions, with the tomato and fennel seed. Cook, covered, over low heat for thirty-five to forty minutes. The beans will darken and soften, and absorb the liquid exuded by the onion and tomato. They might even look brownish. Their rich flavor, heightened but not masked by the tomato and fennel, will be generous recompense.

Southerners cook green beans even longer. Bill Neal, a chef and historian in Chapel Hill and the author of *Bill Neal's Southern Cooking*, my favorite introduction to the subject, recently researched green-bean recipes for his new book, *Biscuits, Spoonbread, and Sweet Potato Pie*. He quotes Azilee Edwards, who wrote in a 1976 book of food from one section of Atlanta: "A green bean is supposed to be cooked at least three hours anyway if you want to make them taste good."

Neal told me that all the recipes call for the liquid to be nearly evaporated by the end, whether the beans are cooked for a half hour or three hours. Most call for unsmoked or lightly smoked bacon. "My mother can cook them that way and they're so good I can't stand it," he said. "There's nothing like those well-cooked beans. They're *not* overcooked. They're well-cooked, and that's not the same thing."

I DON'T HAVE MUCH use for broccoli when it's cooked lightly, and think it's far better after longer cooking. But that's my opinion; it's not necessary to cook it a long time to taste its real flavor, as it is for green beans. The taste of broccoli changes completely with long cooking. It becomes sweeter, milder, smoother, and richer, but not old or cabbagey (broccoli is a member of the cabbage family).

A standard pasta sauce in Italy can also be served as a vegetable dish: broccoli braised for a long time with olive oil, garlic, and hot pepper. (Braising is slow cooking in a covered pan with a small amount of liquid.) Del Conte offers a recipe for broccoli *stu-*





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fati, and Alice Waters and Paul Bertolli, in *Chez Panisse Cooking*, offer one for long-cooked broccoli. They are very similar. To make broccoli *stufati*, cut a pound of broccoli into florets and stems, and peel the stems and cut them into small pieces. Blanch the broccoli pieces in lightly salted boiling water for three minutes. In a sauté pan heat one to three tablespoons of olive oil with five peeled garlic cloves (you can put a toothpick through each clove to help you find it later) and a dried chili. After a minute or two take out the chili and put in the broccoli. Cook, covered, for about forty minutes. This can also be done in a microwave oven, heating the oil, garlic, and chili uncovered for two minutes and then the broccoli covered for about twenty minutes. To make sure that the flavor is concentrated and the texture that of a chunky puree, Waters and Bertolli cook the broccoli for an hour and fifteen minutes; I find that forty minutes is enough. Remove the garlic before serving.

WHAT OF NUTRITION? Isn't long cooking the best way to lose precious nutrients? Not entirely. "The nutrient content of string beans is pretty low," says Jelja Witschi, a lecturer in nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health. "You have some vitamin C and a smattering of B vitamins, but not a huge amount." Heat and time and oxidation destroy these nutrients. The most efficient way to preserve vitamins is to cook whole vegetables quickly in a small amount of water. Small pieces allow more surface area to come into contact with heat, and if the vegetables are boiled, they leach nutrients into the water.

I tried cooking raw green beans with sautéed onion and tomato and fennel seed, but it took them an hour to acquire the flavor I wanted, and they still seemed woody. That woodiness is a problem I haven't been able to overcome in the microwave oven, which is why green beans are among the few vegetables I don't cook in it. A little research led to the reason, and explained why undercooked and old green beans are almost as tough and stringy as pea pods from garden peas (as opposed to snow peas or sugar snap peas, grown to be eaten whole). Green beans are immature beans in their casings, bred to be edible; the casings of mature beans that are meant to be dried are not tasty,

even when picked young. All these casings contain lignin, a substance found in wood, hemp, and linen, but in few other green vegetables.

Boiling seems best at breaking down the lignin, better than braising, steaming, or microwaving. If you want to boil green beans plain, wait for that smell, which is indeed pervasive and, depending on the age of the beans, starts in about ten minutes; taste beans until they seem done. I find that after twelve to fifteen minutes boiled beans seem to have had all the flavor cooked out of them, and that slow braising, in which the beans absorb the small amount of liquid used to cook them, gives them the most flavor. It doesn't turn them to mush, either, probably because of that lignin; even after an hour they remain slightly firm.

Broccoli doesn't present the lignin problem, and so it's easily cooked by several methods. I think it's worth getting used to mushiness for better taste, but you're giving up more than firmness with long cooking. Broccoli is high in vitamin C, which is especially susceptible to heat. You lose a fair amount if you cook broccoli for more than five minutes, and you continue to lose it as you cook it. Not all is lost, however, and with long cooking you can leave on the thick skin of the stalk, which contains additional nutrients. (The skin should be pared if you blanch the broccoli, for even cooking).

I was surprised by a 1980 study cited by David Haytowitz, a nutritionist specializing in vegetables at the Human Nutrition Information Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Six vegetables were tested for nutrient content when canned, frozen, or bought fresh from the supermarket (and then boiled lightly, in little water). All came out similar. Jelja Witschi says, "Almost any vegetable from large packers will be off the vine and in its first processing mode within an hour. They don't fool around with it." She stresses the difference between garden-fresh and market-fresh vegetables, which have usually been in transit for a few days, slowly losing vitamins the whole time.

This is the time of year when you can have truly garden-fresh vegetables, and I wouldn't want to interfere with what's most healthful. Enjoy tender-crisp sugar snap peas. But try a few cooked vegetables with real flavor. □

Books

Designing Universes

by James Gleick

ORIGINS: The Lives and Worlds of Modern Cosmologists
by Alan Lightman
and Roberta Brawer.
Harvard University Press, \$29.95.

YOU KNOW YOU left your glasses downstairs on the coffee table. The kitchen is just off the corridor to the right. There's a grocery store around the corner and down the block. If you kept walking you would reach the river in about ten minutes. The city spills across it, gradually thinning to wooded suburbs. It sits in the foothills of a mountain chain of whose presence you are distantly aware, though the peaks can be seen only on the rarest of clear days. The mountains run down the spine of a continent between two great oceans, on that famously oblate spheroid called Earth. Nor does your sense of place end there. Far away, but not unimaginably so, is the sun, one of 100 billion stars of the Milky Way, itself one of billions of galaxies distributed through space. That space is not the flat, neutral stuff of your grandparents' pre-Einsteinian intuition but an eerily plas-

tic medium that somehow embodies both time and gravity. It also happens to be expanding at high speed, dragging its contents farther and farther apart, thanks to the explosive event that presumably set the whole universe going a mere 10 or 15 billion years ago: the big bang.

That's already a lot to know about where we are, as this remarkable century nears its end. One human lifetime ago our intellectual horizon barely reached to the stars around ours. No one knew that beyond our galaxy lay wide gulfs filled with more galaxies. No one knew how the sun managed to shine or how old anything was. About the universe as a whole, no one knew much of anything. At the very least it seemed safe to assume that the universe was the same everywhere, that it always had been and always would be: world without end, amen. Infinite, static, Euclidean, ageless, and homogeneous—that was the universe as the century began. A comet was a big deal when there were no quasars, no cosmic strings, no singularities, no brown dwarfs or white dwarfs, no black holes or worm holes. Yet even with all these miraculous objects cluttering up the cosmos, somehow we find room for it in our mind's eye. We manage to squeeze it in somewhere after continent, world, and solar system. Our universe must have seemed bigger somehow when it was . . . everything.

The people who have reduced the universe to such manageable propor-

tions are a group known as cosmologists. They are scientists; they start out by playing with chemistry sets, go on to study astronomy or physics, spend years making images with telescopes (the romantic days of looking *through* telescopes being long past), put forward theories mainly in the language of equations, and debate the evidence pro and con in scientific journals. Yet cosmology stands out among the sciences as an enterprise that is not fully scientific after all but an amalgam composed also of philosophy, art, faith, and not a little hope. Black holes may be objects of pure physics, but those who ponder the first hot nanoseconds of the universe's existence are pondering a place where science alone cannot go.

It's hard for any seeker after knowledge to concentrate on the immediate aftermath of the big bang without letting the mind wander to the problem of what was happening, say, a minute earlier. Was a previous universe winding down? Was all creation merely, as the scientists so delicately put it, a fluctuation of the vacuum? Are there other universes having big bangs elsewhere, and if so, elsewhere *in what*? This way madness lies, or at least metaphysics. The big bang itself, despite the volumes of scientific analysis from which the concept sprang, seems to leave cosmologists begging the very biggest questions. Gérard de Vaucouleurs, a French cosmologist interviewed in *Origins: The Lives and Worlds of Modern Cosmologists*, tells the story of

his audience with the pope after a 1979 cosmology conference in Rome: "He gave us a fine speech in Italian, about astronomy and space and about the big bang. He made it very clear that he was all for the big bang, because, essentially, 'We told you so.'" What preceded the big bang? De Vaucouleurs says wryly,

I know what the answer of physicists is: "This is not a question you should ask because this is a mystery. There was no time and there was no space." The theologians used to make it even simpler. "You should not ask those questions, brother, because otherwise the Inquisition will start being interested in you."

ALAN LIGHTMAN, a physicist and the author of two elegant science-essay collections, and Roberta Brawer, a graduate student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, have assembled in *Origins* a sequence of twenty-seven interviews with the best of the cosmologists, leading members of an unusual fellowship—the people who have most effectively replaced theologians. The interviews build on a project at the Center for the History of Physics of the American Institute of Physics; the center has drawn oral history from many of the century's leading scientists. It's in the nature of the oral-history business that such interviews ramble and falter; while they are a rich resource for scientific historians, they don't necessarily make for pleasant or even coherent reading. (Another limitation of the form is that oral historians invariably take a deferential approach to their subjects; pointed or argumentative questions are not part of the game.) On the whole, such interviews make better archives than books. Yet Lightman and Brawer have made something special out of the words of these twenty-seven men and women. If you are willing to tag along for the odd turns into blind alleys and to back up again looking for the main path, a wonderful two-pronged story starts to emerge. Half of it is the story of our horizons' being pushed out to the very edges of the universe. Asking big questions and beginning to hear answers—"the grandness of the cosmological dream . . . that ephemeral realm," as Allan Sandage, an American cosmologist, puts it. The other half is far more sober: the

story of the scientific community, despite all the knowledge it has gained, caught at a moment when its theories are in a terrible, uncertain flux.

The cosmologists' sense of the universe rests on a surprisingly small number of major astronomical observations, each in its own way a monument of modern science. One was Edwin Hubble's discovery, in 1929, that other galaxies are streaming away from ours, and that the farther away they are, the faster they are moving—the discovery, in other words, that the entire universe is expanding. Another was the discovery, in 1965, of a sort of echo of the big bang, a faint, smooth, background radiation coming from every direction in the sky. A third was the discovery, made just in the past few years, that galaxies, far from being randomly scattered about, are organized in patterns that resemble bubbles, on the largest scale anyone can see, from one end of the visible universe to the other.

I say observations, but even these very concrete-seeming discoveries are not really *seen*. What an astronomer sees is groups of numbers representing various wavelengths of light arriving from various directions. Even the most innocent measurement of distance or velocity or age relies on a long chain of inferences: a combination of wavelengths suggests a chemical composition; a chemical composition suggests a galaxy's age or type. Smart guesses can then be made about the luminosity of certain galaxies, and then about their distance from us. Cosmologists don't actually know the distance of any faraway object to an accuracy better than a factor of two or so. Though theory rests on observations, cosmological observations always have some theory built into them in the first place.

Still, those are the verities: the cosmic expansion, the cosmic background radiation, the cosmic large-scale structure. Then come the paradoxes—the flies in the cosmic ointment.

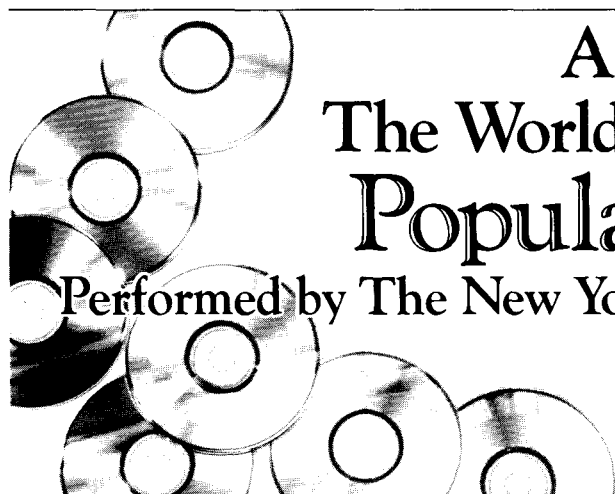
Lightman frames the issues for the reader in a clear and thoughtful fifty-page introduction, and takes pains in the interviews to steer the cosmologists toward the places where modern theory flounders most helplessly in the face of observation. One is that the total mass of the universe seems astoundingly close to the precise amount

needed to make the universe "flat," its ultimate fate to be precisely balanced between eternal expansion and eventual collapse. Many (but not all) see that as a coincidence that badly needs explaining. Perversely, another difficulty is that most of that mass is invisible. The known stars and clouds of gas don't account for it. Cosmologists have been forced into the position of postulating a universe mostly made up of some stuff that is not ordinary matter. What is it? Nobody knows.

There are other problems too. The huge patterns seen in the large-scale structure of galaxies defy easy explanation, as does the evident lack of any pattern at all in the cosmic background radiation. Cosmologists *are* scientists—the numbers are supposed to check out, the theories are supposed to match the observations, and lately, by and large, they don't. While the cosmologists wait to see whether the Hubble Space Telescope will ever be able to provide enlightenment, they are reduced to giving odds and making bets on rival theories, as James Peebles, of Princeton, and Joseph Silk, of Berkeley, say in a new paper in *Nature*: "Many bottles of the finest champagnes and malt whiskies, and even more esoteric stakes, rest in abeyance while observers struggle to count rare photons from remote galaxies. . . ."

IT'S THE VERY messiness of life in the trenches of cosmology that makes *Origins* so useful. Forced to face the limits of science, many of Lightman's interview subjects speak revealingly about the prejudices, the beliefs, and the aesthetic preferences that help shape their views of the universe. Jeremiah Ostriker, of Princeton, points out, for example, that astronomers have grown up learning that the history of their science is a continual subversion of the human-centered perspective: the sun does not revolve around the earth, the Milky Way does not revolve around the sun, the universe does not revolve around the Milky Way. Oddly, therefore, the big-bang theory leaves a subtly uncomfortable feeling, because it places humanity at a special point in time. "Any scientist is brought up to think that anything unique about his place in space and time is probably an artifact of either his imagination or the measurements," Ostriker says.

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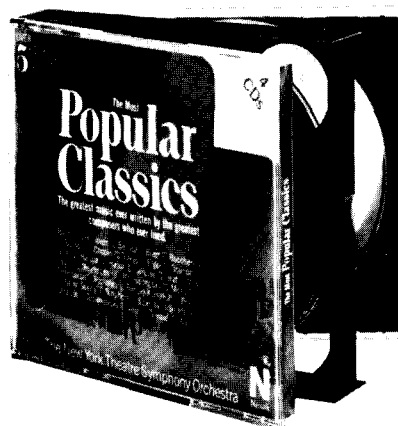
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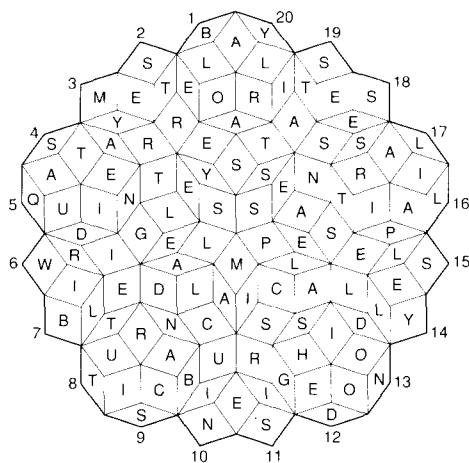
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Answers to the August Puzzler



"QUASICRYSTAL"

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We're bred to have a bias against anything that shows things to be man-centered. In a big bang universe, we're at a privileged point because we know we couldn't have existed in the very distant past or the very distant future. And that seems strange.

No one can quite ignore the fact of our existence. One thing we know about the universe is that it has made possible the existence of creatures capable of asking questions about it. To some cosmologists, life seems infinitely precarious. An arbitrary change in some number here or there would mean that life could never have arisen, or so it seems. Some argue that the proton *must* be 1,836 times heavier than the electron, simply because otherwise there would be no chemistry, no life, and no cosmologists. Others frame the issue more profoundly, like Martin Rees, of Cambridge University, who sees complexity as the central issue. "We have—and our very existence requires—a universe that allows complexity and structure on many scales to evolve within it, starting off from simple beginnings," he says. Regardless, once a cosmologist starts asking what sort of universe makes life possible, it's a short step to thinking about multiple universes, ensembles of universes, mini-universes, parallel nonintersecting universes . . . and one understands why the pope might smile.

In the interests of understanding cosmologists as human beings, Lightman also tries to draw them out about their childhoods and scientific origins, and this comes out poorly, with its repetitious string of science-museum visits and other predictable experiences. Every scientist has told this kind of story too many times. Much more fertile is the philosophical question that Lightman asks near the end of every interview: What kind of universe would you design, if you could have any kind at all? Most of the cosmologists suddenly sparkle. Some like the universe as it is; others wish it could be different. Some passionately desire a steady-state universe, with no big bang, just the quaint infinitude in space and time that seemed to exist a century ago. Some wish they could eliminate disease and injustice. Some want a universe that allows time travel. Some believe that all possible universes already exist, somewhere and somehow.

My favorite answer came, almost inadvertently, from Maarten Schmidt, a Dutch cosmologist. "God! What a wild question," he said first. "This is really the worst question I've ever heard . . . It's like asking me to take off my clothes and start walking around here." And a minute later he added,

I find it extraordinary that it is possible with human means, with pieces of glass that are no larger than this room, to see things that are interestingly far out in the universe. Sometimes it strikes me that the universe is much smaller than . . . All right, here we go. I would have constructed a bigger universe. I think the universe is *small*.

It's no wonder the cosmologists are willing to take on Lightman's challenge. Designing universes is mostly what they're doing anyway. □

A Country's Obsessions

by James Fallows

THE SEA OF FERTILITY
Four novels by Yukio Mishima.
Vintage, \$10.95 per volume.

OUTSIDE JAPAN, Yukio Mishima's life is remembered mainly for what happened on its final day. At 11:00 A.M. on November 25, 1970, Mishima went to the Ichigaya barracks in Tokyo, the regional headquarters of the Japanese army, and asked to see the base's commanding general. Mishima hardly needed to introduce himself. At age forty-five, he was perhaps the most famous private citizen in Japan, an acclaimed novelist who had also become a movie actor, a playwright, and an all-around celebrity. He was quickly ushered into the general's office, along with four youthful devotees dressed in the corny, *Star Trek*-like uniforms of the Tatenokai, or "Society of the Shield," the personal army that Mishima had formed and led. Mishima, too, wore the Tatenokai uniform; from his belt hung a priceless seventeenth-century katana, a long, curving samurai sword.

After a brief chat, Mishima and his

You deserve a factual look at ...

Soviet-Jewish Migration to Israel

Why do the Arabs fear it and fight it?

There are 2 to 3 million Jews living in the Soviet Union today. Under the Soviet Communist system, their culture and their religion have been ruthlessly suppressed for decades. Emigration was virtually impossible. Lately, under glasnost and the more enlightened leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the gates of emigration have begun to open. Most of the emigrants choose Israel as their destination. All Arabs — and not just the "Palestinians" — are unanimous and strident in their opposition to this immigration. What motivates them? What is their concern?

What are the facts?

■ Israel was created for a specific purpose. It is the ingathering of Jews from all over the world, especially those who had been subject for centuries to hostility, violence, oppression, ghettoization, expulsion and — eventually, the unprecedented disaster of the Holocaust, in which 6 million Jews perished. The yearning for the re-establishment of the Jewish homeland in what came to be called "Palestine" had been unremitting over the centuries. In 1917, the British were in control of Palestine and issued the Balfour Declaration, which called for the establishment of "...a national home for Jewish people". This Declaration was confirmed by the League of Nations. The concept of Palestine as a Jewish state was further confirmed by the United Nations, which recognized the new-born Jewish state in 1948.

■ During the second World War, many of the millions of Jews that died in the gas chambers of the Nazis could have been saved if they had been allowed into Palestine. The British, however, under the unrelenting threats of the Arabs, buckled under that pressure and effectively throttled Jewish emigration to Israel, thus condemning many to horrible deaths. The situation today is comparable: Under "glasnost" the virulent history-old anti-Semitism of the Russians and the new-found hatreds in the Islamic parts of the Soviet Union subject the Jewish population to imminent great physical danger and possible pogroms. Emigration to Israel is the only solution.

■ The Arab world has regarded this exodus with undisguised hostility and has urged the Soviet Union to stop emigration to Israel alto-

gether. The pretext for this hostility and opposition is the alleged fear that the Soviet-Jewish immigrants will settle in the administered territories, thus threatening the Palestinian inhabitants and their future hopes for a homeland. But, this is a false charge. The Israeli government gives no incentives to any of the immigrants to move to those areas. Fewer than 1% of all Soviet-Jewish immigrants have moved into the territories.

■ The concern of the Arab states, virtually all of which (with the notable exception of Egypt) consider themselves in a state of war with Israel and which have the destruction of Israel at the very top of their agendas, is not with the "Palestinians". In fact, the "Palestinians" and their aspiration for a homeland are a matter of some indifference to the Arab nations, a pretext for the enmity to Israel. If they were truly concerned about the "Palestinians" and their well-being, they would not have suffered their staying in refugee camps for over forty years, in conditions of utter misery. The real reason is the basic Arab view that the existence of Israel on any land that is considered "sacred Arab soil" is considered a Western plot against Islam and the Arab world and that the destruction of Israel is a sacred religious duty, which calls for "jihad" (holy war) against the "infidels". Even if Israel could be induced to grant the "Palestinians" their mini-state, it would not change the hostility of the Arab nations one iota. Their aim would still be the destruction of Israel, except that, with a Palestinian state, in Israel's heartland, the Arab armies would only be minutes away from Jerusalem, from Tel Aviv, and from the military, industrial, and population centers of the country.

The mass immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel would strengthen Israel. Anything that strengthens Israel is perceived by the Arabs as weakening them and thus making more difficult the planned destruction and dismemberment of the Jewish state. The prospect of Jewish immigration strikes terror in Arab hearts. That explains the hysterical statements and saber rattlings at the recent Arab summit in Baghdad. It explains Arab pressure on the Soviet Union to halt this emigration. It explains why, under Arab pressure, the Soviet Union does not allow direct flights from and to Israel; it explains pressure and threats to blow up commercial aircraft of those countries bordering the Soviet Union that may permit transshipment of Soviet Jews to Israel. Israel was created to be a refuge and homeland to persecuted Jews anywhere in the world. During the second World War, the world stood idly by and did not allow Jews to enter Palestine, which could have saved millions. Nothing like it can be allowed to happen again. Soviet Jews are in imminent mortal danger. They want to leave the Soviet Union and go to Israel. Despite Arab frenzied opposition, the world must see to it that nothing happens to slow this exodus.

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group took the general hostage and tied him to a chair. They drove away military officers and threatened to kill the general unless the entire regiment was summoned to hear Mishima speak. Mishima stood on an outdoor balcony and launched into what he had intended to be a thirty-minute speech, exhorting the 800 soldiers in the courtyard to join him in a revolution to purify Japan. They must overthrow the government, revoke the postwar "Peace Constitution" that denied Japan the dignity and honor of its warrior tradition, and discipline a society that since the war "thinks of money, just money." The Japanese army must be the soul of Nippon, Mishima shouted. After a few minutes the soldiers began to shout in response, "*Bakayaro*"—approximately, "Asshole!" Mishima went back into the commandant's office and while kneeling on the floor drove a foot-long dagger into his abdomen. Masakatsu Morita, a Tatenokai cadet who is thought to have been Mishima's lover, hacked three times at Mishima's neck in an attempt to complete the ritual of *seppuku*. As blood gushed from Mishima's wounds another cadet pushed Morita aside and cleanly beheaded Mishima with one powerful stroke. Morita then cut his belly and was beheaded in his turn. The other three cadets, under written orders from Mishima to resist the temptation

to kill themselves, marched out and offered themselves for arrest.

It's no wonder that this day made an impression outside Japan. Within Japan, Mishima's suicide is often described as the most disturbing event of the postwar years, since it was the most direct challenge to the modern religion of GNP. Its importance in Japan was deepened by a factor to which the outside world was less sensitive, and that was symbolized by Mishima's actions earlier in the day.

Before he set off to Ichigaya with his cadets, Mishima sent his publishers the final pages of his novel *The Decay of the Angel*, which followed *Spring Snow*, *Runaway Horses*, and *The Temple of Dawn* to complete a four-novel sequence called *The Sea of Fertility*. (It would be bad policy to let American editors reflect on the example Mishima set for authors: in this one day he delivered his work on time, generated publicity for himself and his book, and then got out of the editors' way.) Mishima had concentrated on the series for the previous six years. Its title was heavy-handedly ironic. The Sea of Fertility, actually a desolate plain on the moon's surface, was Mishima's symbol for the moral life of "prosperous" modern Japan.

English translations of *The Sea of Fertility* have been available since the early 1970s, but Vintage International has

just brought them out in a handsome uniform paperback edition. The four novels have their excesses and eccentricities, especially a self-dramatizing and sometimes juvenile sensibility that matches the style of the author's life and death. Indeed, the second book in the sequence, *Runaway Horses*, concerns a failed military uprising similar in some ways to the one the Tatenokai undertook, and it ends with the protagonist's glorious suicide. (The final

words: "Then, with a powerful thrust of his arm, he plunged the knife into his stomach. The instant that the blade tore open his flesh, the bright disk of the sun soared up and exploded behind his eyelids.")

In Japan Mishima is considered a better playwright than novelist, and among his novels the most polished single

work is not any from the *Fertility* sequence but *Confessions of a Mask*, the memoir of a beautiful, brilliant, and completely amoral young man, which is assumed to be autobiographical. In the English translations the style of the *Fertility* novels is sometimes mannered and showy, and apparently it is much more so in Japanese. Edward Seidensticker, a renowned translator who handled the fourth volume of the series, wrote in his diary while working on the book, "I know pretty well from the outset what he is trying to say . . . but [I] must constantly be taking up a dictionary in search of eccentric, pretentious words."

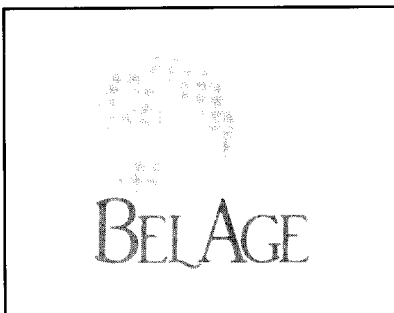
Still, for all their defects these are truly engrossing works. Foreigners who know about Mishima only that he went to extremes should welcome the chance to read *The Sea of Fertility* and see how he put his obsessions to use.

THE FOUR NOVELS, which total about 1,400 pages, are linked by a single character, Shigekuni Honda. In the first book, *Spring Snow*, Honda is introduced as a priggish and coldly logical student at Peers School, an aristocratic prep school in Tokyo, who devotes himself to preparing for the Imperial University's entrance exams. This novel is set in 1912, a date that in the West evokes the uneasy moments just before the Great War but in

Japan symbolizes the contentment and self-congratulation that followed victory in the Russo-Japanese War. Twenty years later, in *Runaway Horses*, Honda is in his late thirties and has become a judge in Osaka. He resigns from the bench to defend a group of right-wing extremist cadets who tried to stage a military coup and failed. By the end of the third book, *The Temple of Dawn*, Honda is nearly sixty. He is trying, like most of his countrymen, to reconstruct life after Japan's total defeat, and he is no longer as upright or logical as he used to be. The final book, *The Decay of the Angel*, is set in the early 1970s (much of it takes place after Mishima's own death) and shows Honda as a man in his seventies and eighties not simply worn out but hideously corrupted in a variety of ways. By the end of the first book it becomes clear that there will be another connecting strand. The plot of *Spring Snow* concerns a doomed love affair between Satoko Ayakura, an aristocratic young woman of rare beauty, and Kiyooki Matsugae, a classmate of Honda's who (like many of Mishima's male heroes) is even more beautiful. Kiyooki, willful and spoiled, ignores Satoko until she becomes unavailable to him, through her engagement to an Imperial prince. Then he is suddenly consumed with desire for her and they begin a furtive affair that leaves her pregnant. Because of her engagement to a member of the Emperor's family, this is a threat not just to Satoko's honor but to "the continued tranquillity of His Sacred Majesty." The denouement separates the lovers and leaves Kiyooki dead at age twenty.

Before he dies, Kiyooki has been hinting to Honda that the two of them will meet again—and in this world. In the second and third novels Mishima explicitly presents characters as reincarnations of Kiyooki. The fervent young swordsman who kills himself at the end of *Runaway Horses*, after indicating that his highest ambition is to cut his belly and die a pure and beautiful death, is Kiyooki reborn, as is Ying Chan, a female member of the Siamese royal family, twenty years later in *The Temple of Dawn*. The reincarnated people are not conscious of their previous lives; Honda alone recognizes the connection. The first character tells Honda about dreams that provide clues to where the later ones will appear; each reincarnation is

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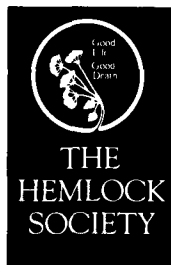


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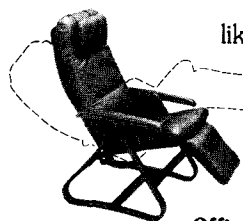
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marked by three distinctive moles on the left side of the chest. Each character must die by the age of twenty, shortly after which the spirit enters his next mother's womb. Honda's grip on clear, lawyerly logic understandably weakens with each supernatural encounter. In the final book he brings Tōru, a surpassingly beautiful but cruel sixteen-year-old marked with three moles, into his house, essentially to watch him die. Honda faces complete consternation as Tōru survives to age twenty-one. By this time Tōru has been blinded by poison he swallowed in a suicide attempt while still only twenty, but his survival convinces Honda that Tōru's spirit is not Kiyooki's after all. The evidence suggests that Mishima never really believed in reincarnation. In a newspaper interview given a week before he killed himself, Mishima said that he used it mainly as a convenient narrative tool—but then was forced to lard the third book with long passages on the Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation, to keep the whole series from being seen as a mere "fairy tale." The last novel ends with the aged Honda seeking out Satoko, who has for the sixty years since her romance with Kiyooki lived cloistered as a nun. Honda says that he has come to discuss the young man who made such a mess of both their lives. Satoko replies:

"Kiyooki Matsugae. Who might he have been? . . . Don't you suppose, Mr. Honda, that there never was such a person? You seem convinced that there was; but don't you suppose that there was no such person from the beginning, anywhere?"

Early in 1970 Mishima told Seidensticker that he was thinking of ending the series this way. Seidensticker wrote in his diary (published as *Genji Days*), "I told him that I liked the idea, though I did not quite know what it meant. That life was a dream? He allowed that he did not know either."

BUT MISHIMA clearly did believe in other themes of the series, and they are what make the books so fascinating now. Mishima writes as powerfully about the psychology of obsession as anyone since Dostoyevsky. Almost every figure in the book is eventually undone by impulses he or she cannot control. Even Honda is completely humiliated through trans-

gressions that would sound unlikely if I summarized them here but that follow an almost inescapable logic in the book. Among the several obsessions Mishima explores—the romance of suicide, the corrupting effects of great physical beauty—the one that becomes most intense is the horror of aging and physical decline. In his thirties and early forties Mishima became a fanatical bodybuilder and posed for semi-erotic photos that were published in books and magazines. But at age forty-five he was already disgusted by what was becoming of his face and form; many people have suggested that the fear of growing old and ugly was the one unanswerable argument for suicide. In the pages Mishima wrote just before his death, Honda is revolted by his own ugliness and decay. This is not the series to read when nearing a major birthday.

Despite their fixation on the supernatural and the irrational, the first two novels in particular are marvelous works of Jane Austen-like social portraiture. Each depicts Japanese society at a crucial moment of its adjustment to the Western world. In *Spring Snow*, Japan is in the Taisho era, its brief counterpart to the Victorian age, with rising industrialist families celebrating their own vigor and Japan as a whole embracing European manners as if to ratify its economic and technical equality with the West. Mishima's aristocratic families show off by serving their guests English tea in bone china, not bitter green *o-cha* in earthen cups; his magnates compete to import the latest Model-T Ford, much as their modern counterparts compete to possess French Impressionist works of art. By the time of *Runaway Horses*, set in the early 1930s, the mood has completely changed, and the most vigorous characters are those who try to cleanse Japan of inherently corrupting foreign ways. Mishima portrays a leader of the Meiji-era Kamikazé ("League of the Divine Wind") who refused to walk beneath telegraph wires, because they originated abroad. "If he found it impossible to avoid them" when walking each morning to his Shinto devotions, "he passed beneath while shielding his head with a white fan." Mishima says that the zealots who joined this earlier league faced rifles while armed only with samurai swords, to prove the purity of their Japanese spirit.

The deeply divided view of Western values, which seem simultaneously so attractive and so impure, creates enormous tension in Japanese society now, as it has for most of the past century. Mishima obviously contained both sides of the contradiction within himself. He cultivated foreigners as friends, loved going overseas, and revelled in praise from the outside world. Yet he finally committed himself to a

gesture as xenophobic and extreme as any he had imagined in print. Mishima's books, and his life, cannot be taken as literal guides to modern Japanese beliefs, any more than the raft scenes in *Huckleberry Finn* tell us explicitly about American race relations in the 1990s. But as Twain's books reveal general truths about our culture, so does *The Sea of Fertility*, for better and worse, about Japan. □

Brief Reviews



PORTRAIT GALLERY by Agnes de Mille. Houghton Mifflin/Peter Davison, \$19.95. In addition to her great achievements as a choreographer, Ms. de Mille writes admirably. Her portraits of dancers, producers, relatives, friends, and a mad cook bring all these people sharply to life. By reflection, they reveal the author as a generous admirer of the skills of fellow professionals, a ruefully humorous observer of her own errors, a firm hater of producers, and a hopelessly soft touch. Nobody else would have tolerated that cook for a month. The chapter on the career and influence of Isadora Duncan is probably the best account ever provided of that eccentric genius. Ms. de Mille never knew Duncan or saw her in action, but her vast knowledge of dance and its capabilities enables her to reconstruct, with great conviction, what Duncan did for her audiences and for the status of dance as a serious art. Witty, informative, quietly passionate, this book is a beautiful performance.

FAKE? THE ART OF DECEPTION edited by Mark Jones. University of California, \$49.95 cloth; \$29.95 paper. The British Museum has recently organized an exhibition of fakes, frauds, copies, reproductions, forgeries, facsimiles, and replicas, almost all presented and discussed in this fascinating book. Fakery has a long and dishonorable history. It has been discovered in the first half of the second millennium B.C., when certain Babylonian priests forged antique claims for their temple. "It has recent-

ly been estimated that the great monastic houses of England were so busy forging writs in the century after the Norman Conquest that over half of the surviving charters of Edward the Confessor may be spurious." Where priests led, laymen have dutifully followed, faking everything from Etruscan statuary to Vuitton luggage. But exactly what, the authors ask, is a fake? This question leads to subtle and provocative discussions of the distinction between criminal intent and loving emulation, and between the financial value of the original work and that of the accurate replica that produces the same aesthetic response. The volume offers extensive opportunities for argument, plus a wild variety of illustrations for use as evidence.

BROKEN PLACES by László Petrovics-Ofner. Atlantic, \$19.95. The author was born in 1948, which makes his story of growing up in Hungary during the Second World War necessarily a novel. He simply was not there when his Christian mother's Jewish relatives wore yellow stars and vanished into Nazi mists, nor when his father, an army doctor, risked his life to avoid going to the Eastern Front, but he forces the reader to believe that he was there and saw it all. The effect is odd but also poignant.

COYOTE WAITS by Tony Hillerman. Harper & Row, \$19.95. Given the vast amounts of empty space available on the great Navajo Reservation, one would think that a murderer could op-

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THE CHINA MARKET

by Lynn Chu

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DEADLY SHORTFALL

by Joel L. Swerdlow
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erate unobserved and undetected. Such is not the case, however, when the pragmatic Lieutenant Leaphorn and the intuitive Officer Chee converge on the killing. Not weather nor glorious scenery nor roads improved from "terrible to fairly bad" suffice to deter, much less defeat, Mr. Hillerman's engaging tribal policemen, although female company can briefly (and discreetly) distract their attention. The plot of this mystery is a humdinger even by the high Hillerman standard.

BEYOND THE BARRIER by Eugene Rodgers. *Naval Institute, \$24.95.* Richard E. Byrd, whose flight to the South Pole was a great news story in the late 1920s, privately described himself as being "in the hero business." He had to be; it was the way to raise money for his very expensive expedition. Now, the hero business is difficult to maintain, and Byrd's required bluff, diplomacy, and a certain amount of plain lying, all—or most—of which Mr. Rodgers has tracked down. His "Story of Byrd's First Expedition to Antarctica" is not, however, a malicious debunking job. He gives Byrd deserved credit for what the expedition accomplished in scientific and technological work and in the innovative use of airplanes and radio, laying the foundation for all subsequent Antarctic exploration and study. Byrd also managed to keep an assortment of highly energetic, not always congenial young men from either mutiny or murder through months of darkness and boredom and crowded quarters, with no real backing for his authority except his tact and ingenuity. He may not have done, personally, all that he claimed he had, but none of it would have been done without him. The book is a bit slow in starting. Once under way, it becomes an irresistible journey for the exploration buff, and let it not be forgotten that a properly classic hero needs at least one clay foot.

MOUNT ST. HELENS by Rob Carson. *Sasquatch, \$19.95.* Mr. Carson briskly describes the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980, and goes on to report what has happened in the devastated area since then. The natural re-establishment of plants and animals in the affected zone has been of great interest to scientists, for no such process has ever before been observed. The story

is, of course, far from over. Water conditions remain dangerous, and conflicts of interest flourish. Lumberers wish to continue their business, and the scientists are maddened by sporting types who invade the natural laboratory in snowmobiles. Mr. Carson has a lively story to tell and does it well. The photographs, by Geff Hinds, Cheryl Haselhorst, and Gary Braasch, provide beauty as well as information.

MEMOIRS by *Andrei Sakharov. Knopf, \$29.95.* Early in his exciting recollections Sakharov warns his readers, first, that passages on his scientific researches may as well be skipped by nonscientists and, second, that no chapter will contain any information about the actual creation of the hydrogen bomb. What no reader will want to skip is the story of how a nonpolitical physicist, working for the defense of his country, gradually perceived the immense danger of atomic warfare and the injustices rampant in his society, and resolved to do something about both. He and his wife, Elena Bonner, refused to be cajoled or bribed or bullied from their campaign. She, as a decorated and disabled war veteran, commanded respect. Sakharov, as an internationally renowned physicist, a bemedaled Academician, and "the father of the hydrogen bomb," commanded something close to awe. The Soviet authorities could not simply sweep them under a Siberian rug. They could be packed off to Gorky, however, and there subjected to KGB persecutions that ranged from the ridiculous to the potentially fatal, none of which silenced them. (There are times when one feels a faint, a very faint, twinge of pity for the KGB goons assigned to clutching the tails of these two magnificent tigers.) Sakharov tells his story through specific episodes interspersed with sketches of colleagues and officials and with explanations of his stand on various political and social questions. Every bit of the text is enormously impressive.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A DRUID PRINCE by *Anne Ross and Don Robins. Summit, \$19.95.* In 1984 English peat cutters found a body in their bog. Mr. Robins, a specialist in the analysis of food remains, was one of the crew of experts summoned to determine when and how the man died, his age and

condition at the time, and anything else of possible relevance, including his last meal. It was decided that he died in the first century A.D., of highly elaborate, presumably ritual, wounds, that he had been about thirty years old, that his elegantly manicured hands had never been contaminated by tool or weapon, and that his last meal—Mr. Robins's province—had been nothing that any reasonable person would normally have wished to eat. This information attracted Anne Ross, an expert on Celts, including Druids. The scholars have collaborated in reconstructing the circumstances of the death of Lindow Man, with occasional references to "some authorities" and "classical authors," none of whom can be tracked down in the bibliography. Readers with a taste for speculative archaeology will enjoy the detective work. Others can merely marvel at the structure that the authors have derived from one half of a 2,000-year-old corpse.

BEGINNING by *Kenneth Branagh. Norton, \$19.95.* Mr. Branagh, an impressively successful actor-director-playwright at the age of twenty-eight, wrote his autobiography because, as he cheerfully admits, he wanted money. According to Dr. Johnson, "No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money," and Mr. Branagh is no blockhead. His unpretentious account of his career is notable among thespian memoirs for the clarity with which he describes and explains theatrical processes and problems of the sort that often, in books of this type, remain beyond a nonprofessional reader's comprehension.

NINE FAIRY TALES by *Karel Capek. Northwestern University, \$24.95 cloth; \$9.95 paper.* Mr. Capek's fairy tales contain the proper elements of the genre. Assorted supernaturals, repetitions, word games, outlandish plots—all are here. Also present is slyly clever satire of policemen, judges, the mail service, good behavior, and authority in general. Whinny, the howling goblin, is last heard of "in the big city of Balderdash where, the rumor was, he had gone into politics" with great success. Ostensibly for children, these impish stories, newly translated, can be, and should be, enjoyed by adults as well.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams

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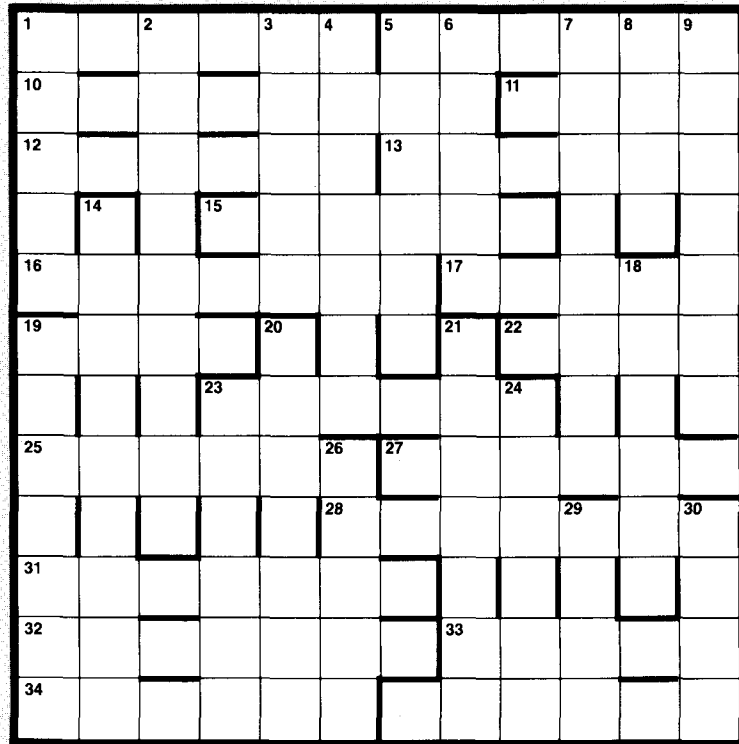
THE PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

TWISTING ROUTE

When all clue answers have been entered in this diagram, solvers will be able to trace the wandering journey of some familiar characters. The journey begins in a square in an appropriate word, and then twists through the diagram moving from one square to another, up, down, left, or right (but never diagonally), spelling out the characters' names. The journey ends in another appropriate word, for which no clue is given. Answers to clues include five proper nouns; 7 Down is a common phrase not found in dictionaries.

The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 116.



ACROSS

1. Fund is poorer, left with \$100 in it (6)
5. Be thrilled lady's kept in touch (6)
10. Peg is born back in Santa Fe, e.g. (8)
11. John Wayne at first rejected material (4)
12. Hector and Sally formally returned last of gifts (6)
13. Radio antenna is lower—bravo (6)
15. Miscue confused member of an elementary group (6)
16. Fuel covering a street by the shore (7)
17. Name of football player returning to his city? (5)
19. Musical piece in uproar, ending at the beginning (4)
22. Lamp from end of Iron Age (4)
23. Fat entirely absorbed by fiber (6)

25. Note child holding right answer (6)
27. Name for French swirl (6)
28. A mass meeting engulfs university, in a sense (7)
31. Disbeliever near the scene of a crime? (7)
32. Engineer stocked case records (7)
33. Greasy behind front of door mat (5)
34. Describing Nepal's capital, make a speech flowery (6)

DOWN

1. England's earliest and mostly stupid set of values (5)
2. Nice try at distorting truth (9)
3. One offensive formation conceals source of sneak attack (5)
4. Complain about jerk's carousal (7)
5. Club covering—it flipped neatly (6)
6. Bone site in Asia Minor (5)

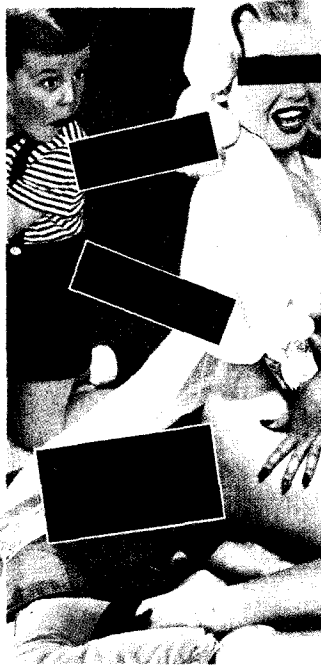
7. Enjoyable book: *Fear of Baby Talk?* (8) (*two words*)
8. Lounge lizard's first love left twice (4)
9. The Cuban agent made wrong choice (7)
14. Bringer of misery to guys dwelling in hills (9)
18. Noble drolly frolics (6)
19. Big blow disrupted a coiffure (7)
20. Woman I rather fancy (7)
21. Half of cows run free before a bullfight (7)
23. Booze king supported by a Midwestern town (6)
24. No place in church turned up concealing a gun (6)
26. Like failing a test (5)
29. One wearing the Parisian necklaces (4)
30. Cheers up, say, about leader of youth (4)

NOTE: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

WORD HISTORIES

Etymologies derived from the files of the Dictionary of American Regional English

BY CRAIG M. CARVER



bimbo

"I'm not seeing anyone. It's *bimbo* limbo until this thing cools off." That statement was made by the cartoon character Donald Trump in Garry Trudeau's *Doonesbury*, in reference to the past spring's tabloid folderol surrounding the real-estate magnate's personal life. *Bimbo*, sometimes abbreviated to *bim* ("Studs Lonigan copped

off [stole from] a *bim* whose old man is lousy with dough"—James T. Farrell, *Studs Lonigan*, 1936), means a "woman of loose morals, floozy." The origins of the term are not quite certain. In the nineteenth century a punch made with cognac or rum was called *bimbo* or *bumbo*, probably from the Italian *bombo*, a child's word for "drink." Like the progression that occurred with *tart* (a small fruit pie; a prostitute), the idea of "potent punch" may have come naturally to be applied to a saucy, loose woman. An alternative explanation holds that English borrowed the term from the Italian *bimbo* (little child, baby), which in turn came from *bambo* (silly), the diminutive of which, *bambino*, is another word for "baby." English extended its sense from "child" to "fellow or chap," usually with derisive connotations. The meaning "fellow" would then have undergone a gender shift—an evolution not without precedent. *Brothel*, for example, originally meant "worthless fellow or scoundrel," then "prostitute," both senses now being obsolete. Similarly, a *harlot* was originally a vagabond or knave.

kaput

When Egon Krenz, the former East German Communist Party chief, made a campaign-style visit to Leipzig late last year, he announced to a group of workers and shoppers, "I don't think socialism is *kaput*. I think the disfigurements of socialism are *kaput*." *Kaput* (broken, ruined, destroyed), which English adopted from German in the 1890s, was itself borrowed by the Germans from the French during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The French had an expression, *faire capot* (be defeated), which the Germans translated as *caput* (or *capot*) *machen*; later they abstracted *caput* or *kaputt* from the phrase, pronouncing the final *t* sound. The French *faire capot* is from the card game piquet and means "to make no tricks." Piquet is a two-handed game played with a pack of 32 cards, the cards two through six having been dropped, and is scored on tricks and various combinations of cards. It has its own terminology, including *capot*, which English borrowed directly from French when the game came to England, and *carte blanche*, which referred to

a hand with no face cards, from *avoir cartes blanches* (to have blank cards). *Capot* itself means "cover, hood, cape, bonnet." By taking all the tricks in the game, one defeats the opponent so thoroughly that he may be disconcerted, as though covered over (compare *bury one's opponent*) or as though a hood had been thrown over his head (compare *hoodwinked*).



yob

When rioters this year protested in London about a new system of local taxes, *Newsweek* headlined an article "YOB POLITICS IN BRITAIN." "Yobs," the magazine argued, "have taken on a new image as the cutting edge of a growing underclass—the shock troops in a new bid to end the formidable sway of Margaret Thatcher." *Yob* is one of the few examples of Cockney slang that have become accepted in general British English. It is from "back slang," the secret jargon that originated in the 19th century and was favored by costers, or costermongers—from *costard*

(apple) and *monger* (dealer, seller)—the vendors or hawkers of produce who worked the streets of London. In back slang a word is spelled backward (*rum* becomes *mur*; *pot of beer* becomes *top o' reeb*). Because most words when

spelled backward contain impossible combinations of letters, vowels are often inserted, as in *tenip* for *pint*, *delo* for *old*, *yennep* for *penny* ("I've been doing awful dab with my tol . . . haven't made a *yennep*")—*London Life*, 1877). Sometimes the

word is rearranged, as in *nosper* for *person* (a common word for "stranger"), not to be confused with *nosrap*, for *parson*, and *ka-bac genals* for *back slang*, used to signal to another speaker that this mode of conversation is agreeable. *Yob* is unusually straightforward, deriving, of course, from *boy*. In the 1850s it meant simply "boy, youth," but was later extended to "lout, hooligan" ("Let's go to the pictures." . . . 'And have my enjoyment ruined by the Sunday night *yobs* in the front row?')—John Osborne, *Look Back in Anger*, 1957). Its offspring, *yobbery*, *yobbish*, *yobby*, and *yobbo* or *yobo* are also in general British use.



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